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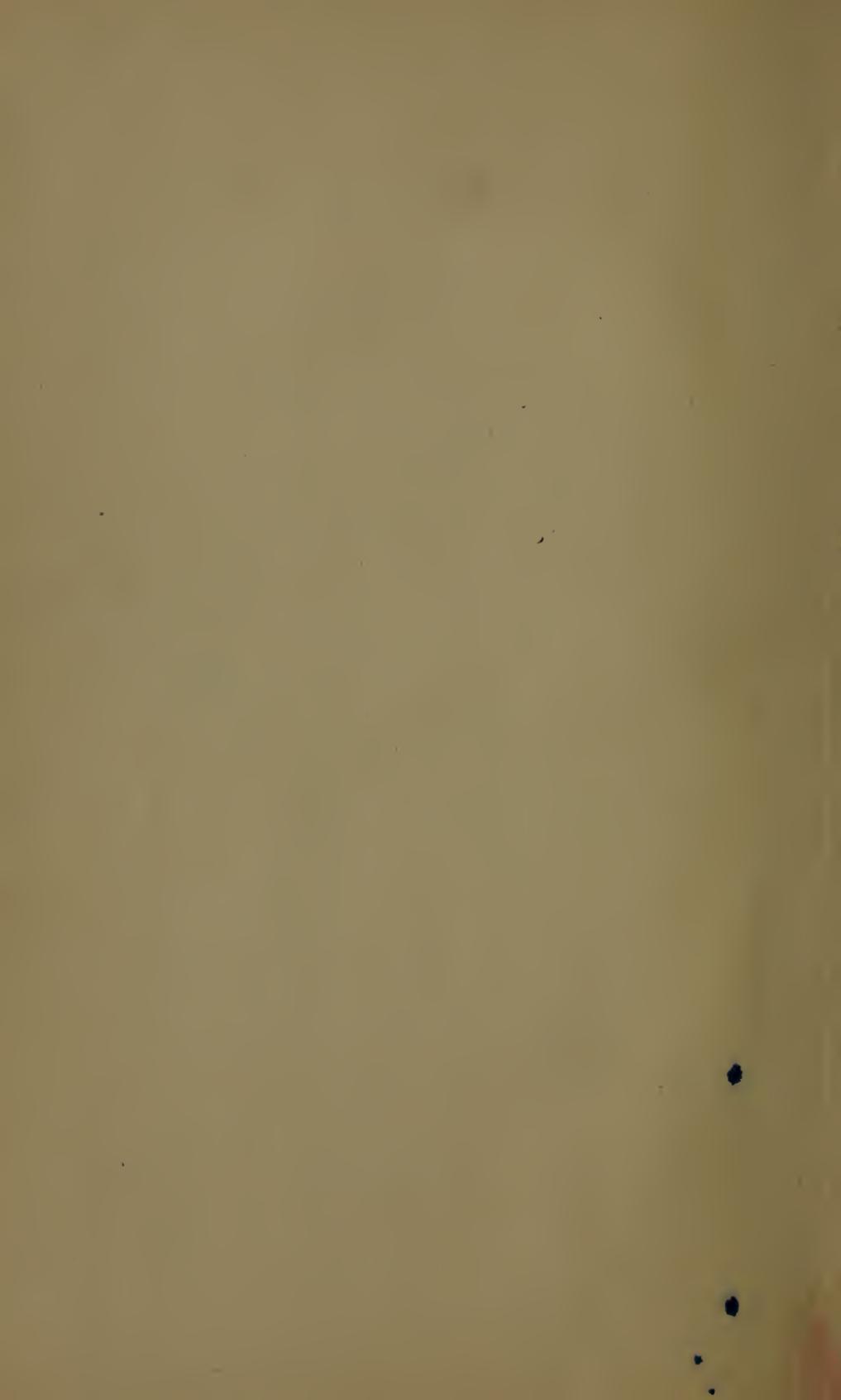
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Came Ted*

by

Walter Ben Hare

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T. S. Denison & Company, Publishers

154 West Randolph Street

CHICAGO

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AND HOME CAME TED

*America — the land we love
America — all else above
America the beloved,
America !*

— — —

DEDICATED TO MY PAL,
An American Soldier,
JAMES ARTHUR MCCREA

And Home Came Ted

A Comedy of Mystery in Three Acts
Guaranteed Under the Pure Fun Laws

BY
WALTER BEN HARE
AUTHOR OF

*"Aaron Boggs, Freshman," "Abbu San of Old Japan,"
"Civil Service," "A College Town," "A Country Boy
Scout," "The Fascinators," "Kicked Out of College,"
"Laughing Water," "Macbeth a la Mode," "Mrs.
Tubbs of Shantytown," "Parlor Matches," "A
Poor Married Man," "Rose o' My Heart,"
"A Rustic Romeo," "Savageland," "Sew-
ing for the Heathen," "A Southern Cin-
derella," "The White Christmas, and
Other Merry Christmas Plays,"
etc., etc.*



CHICAGO
T. S. DENISON & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

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AND HOME CAME TED

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS FOR SIX MEN AND SIX WOMEN

CHARACTERS.

(*In the order of their appearance.*)

SKEET KELLY	.....	<i>The Clerk</i>
DIANA GARWOOD	.....	<i>The Heiress</i>
MISS LOGANBERRY	.....	<i>The Spinster</i>
IRA STONE	.....	<i>The Villain</i>
AUNT JUBILEE	.....	<i>The Cook</i>
MR. MAN	.....	<i>The Mystery</i>
JIM RYKER	.....	<i>The Lawyer</i>
MOLLIE MACKLIN	.....	<i>The Housekeeper</i>
HENRIETTA DARBY	.....	<i>The Widow</i>
TED	.....	<i>The Groom</i>
ELSIE	.....	<i>The Bride</i>
SENATOR MC'CORCKLE	.....	<i>The Father</i>

SCENE: *The office and reception room of the Rip Van Winkle Inn in the Catskill Mountains.*

ACT I. An afternoon in April. What happened to Ted?

ACT II. The same night. Who was the burglar?

ACT III. The next morning. Who was Mr. Man?

TIME OF PLAYING—*Two and one-quarter hours.*

THE STORY OF THE PLAY.

“And Home Came Ted” is a sprightly comedy of mystery in which there is an abundance of fun without any taint of impropriety or any element of offense. The thrilling story is cleverly written and the interest of any audience is held from the beginning to the end by a series of dramatic situations rising from one climax to another until the final denouement at the close of the last act.

The action of the comedy occurs at the Rip Van Winkle Inn in the Catskill Mountains and the plot has to do with a struggle for supremacy in a furniture factory between Ted, the rightful heir, and one Ira Stone, an unscrupulous adventurer, who is trying to gain control of the business. Ted is assisted by Mollie Macklin, the plucky little housekeeper of the Rip Van Winkle Inn.

The first act of the play takes place the day before the annual meeting of the stockholders of the factory and according to a clause in the by-laws of the company every stockholder must register with the attorney by midnight preceding the meeting. Ted holds the controlling interest but Mollie is in despair because he has failed to come home in time to sign the register. The attorney is ready to receive Ted's signature, the other stockholders have signed, the unscrupulous Stone is anxiously waiting to see whether his forty shares will gain him the control of the business, and Molly and Skeet Kelly, the hotel clerk, are eagerly waiting for the train. It comes, but Ted does not arrive. Finally, as a last desperate chance to save the factory from Stone, Mollie and Skeet persuade a young civil engineer to impersonate the missing Ted. The plan seems to be working out well,

Stone is thoroughly discouraged, and all is going as merry as a marriage-bell when the lawyer, Jim Ryker, explodes a bomb by announcing that he is personally acquainted with the real Ted. Mollie and Skeet, having already introduced the bogus Ted to the other stockholders, are at their wits' ends to know what to do, when the lawyer mysteriously disappears and the engineer is formally presented as the young heir.

Complications come fast and furious in Act II, for the real Ted has been the boyhood lover of a comedy old maid and she is anxiously awaiting his return. The engineer is kept busy trying to escape from the spinster and at the same time trying to further his own heart interest in Diana Garwood, a guest at the Inn. Ted comes home and brings a bride with him, but the resourceful Mollie hides them in the basement. The plot is further complicated by a mysterious widow from Honolulu, who has a penchant for playing the ukulele and singing "Aloha Oe" to any man available. She, too, owns stock in the furniture company and places it in the safe at the Inn for the night and all the guests retire after an evening of dancing in the dining room. Mollie has locked up the place for the night and has just put out the lights when a noise is heard at the office window. Mollie conceals herself and a mysterious form steals into the darkened room and begins to rifle the safe. Mollie gives the alarm but the mysterious burglar escapes and with him the shares of stock owned by the lady from Honolulu.

The third act takes place on the morning after the robbery. Slowly, bit by bit, the many mysteries of the play are solved, surprise follows surprise and

the dramatic situations in this act fairly teem with life and sustaining interest. A mysterious, deaf old farmer appears, the lady from Honolulu turns out to be the lawyer's ex-wife, Ted turns out to be somebody else, the robber is located, the real Ted turns up, the unscrupulous Ira Stone is temporarily victorious but later ignominiously routed, and the faithful little housekeeper, Mollie Macklin, finds the road to happiness with Skeet, the boy from the Bowery.

LIST OF PROPERTIES.

ACT I.

- Hotel desk or counter.
- Keyboard with several keys.
- Register (large book).
- Stationery.
- Curtains at window and doors.
- Fur rugs.
- Settle.
- Two rustic tables.
- Telephone.
- Screen.
- Rocking chair.
- Several easy chairs and rustic chairs.
- Blooming flowers in pot.
- Safe.
- Andirons and fender.
- Auto horn (to be honked outside).
- Sling (white bandage) for SKEET.
- Red sock and knitting needles for Miss L.
- Magazine for DIANA.
- Ukulele for HENRIETTA.
- Basket for AUNT J.
- Large grip for MAN, another for HENRIETTA.

Five fancy lemonades (pink) on small tray.
Glass crash (outside). Pieces of broken
crockery or glass in small soap box.
Dinner chimes near hotel desk.

ACT II.

Grips for TED.
Phonograph (off stage at L.).
Lunch on tray.
Small jewel-case containing bonds.
Candle for AUNT J.
Electric flashlight for JIM.
Lighted lamp for AUNT J.

ACT III.

Broom for AUNT J.
Glass of water for SKEET.
Pack of cards for JIM.
Dinner bell on the counter for MOLLIE.

COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS.

SKEET—A slangy, good-natured boy of about 19, obviously from the East Side of New York City. Act I: Gray trousers, too tight and too short but not to the point of burlesque, black jersey, gaudy hose, low yellow shoes with “hard-boiled egg” toes. Same costume in Acts II and III, except change to a misfit dress suit in Act II, as indicated in the text of the play. His right arm is in a sling during the entire play. This must be noted at rehearsals to prevent undue awkwardness on night of performance. He wears a cap when going outside.

DIANA—A dashing, self-reliant, athletic girl of 20, preferably a blonde. Act I: Pale green and white outing costume. Act II: Elaborate white and

silver evening dress with white cloak or lace shawl when she exits *C. D.* Act III: Pretty light colored morning dress.

MISS L.—A kittenish old maid of 43, hair gray and arranged in an exaggerated fashion. Large library spectacles throughout play. Act I: Gaudy afternoon dress, change to trailing dinner dress of bright color. Red feather in hair and red feather fan. Act III: Gaudy morning toilette.

STONE—A chunky villain, aged 40, with iron gray hair, bushy eyebrows and a down-curving mustache a la Bismarck. Act I: Afternoon suit, light over-coat, derby hat, change to dinner clothes. Act II: Dinner clothes. Act III: Same as first suit in Act I.

AUNT J.—A negro mammy. Old shoes, calico dress, kerchief, apron and bandana or dust cap in Act I. Act II: Same costume but change to white party dress as indicated in play. Act III: Same as Act I. Use prepared burnt cork for make-up with a little water, but no grease or cold cream. Remove make-up with warm water.

MAN—A rather tall, good looking, athletic chap of 23. Act I: Laced boots, brown trousers, brown flannel shirt, old brown coat and felt hat. Large grip. Change to dinner clothes. Act II: Dinner clothes. In Act III, white outing suit.

JIM—A typical business man of 25. Act I: Neat afternoon suit, change to dinner clothes. Act II: A complete change in make-up and costume. Gray or white wig and whiskers. Old-fashioned boots. Farmer suit of gray or tan, celluloid collar, large Stetson hat, long old-fashioned overcoat, bandana, spectacles. Walk with a cane and bend over. The voice

should be completely changed when he is disguised. Much care should be given to this farmer impersonation, as the success of the play depends on the deception of the audience by this character. In the burglar scene he must make another change as the audience must not be allowed to suspect that the burglar is either JIM or the farmer.

MOLLIE—A vivacious, self-reliant, country girl of 20. Act I: Simple dark street dress, hat and gloves. Act II: Simple evening dress with white lace collar. Act III: Similar to Act I. Note: Do *not* overdress this part. Any fairly competent actress can win the audience entirely in this character without the superficial aids of elaborate make-up or costuming.

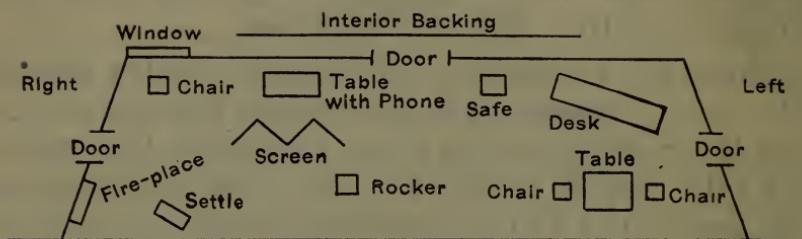
HENRIETTA—A striking brunette of 26. Act I: Long traveling coat and large elaborate hat. Quick change to brilliant dinner dress *cut en traine*. Act III: Elaborate walking costume.

TED—Quick in action and speech. A boyish man of 22. Elaborate walking suit throughout play. Neat hat, spats, gloves, etc.

ELSIE—Nervous and very excited at all times. Neat traveling dress and coat. Lace blouse. Handsome hat. Small satchel.

SENATOR—Aged 50. Very pompous and commanding. Gray wig and mustache. Face well made up. Neat walking suit suitable to age and station. Eyeglasses and cane.

INTERIOR BACK.



STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means right of stage; *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *1 E.*, first entrance; *U. E.*, upper entrance; *R. 3 E.*, right entrance, up stage, etc.; up stage, away from footlights; down stage, near footlights. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

AND HOME CAME TED

THE FIRST ACT.

SCENE—*The office and reception room of the Rip Van Winkle Inn in the Catskill Mountains. There are three openings in the boxed interior set, L., R. and C. C. leads into a rear hallway with openings R. to veranda and L. to front yard. The other two openings, R. and L., are about half-way back, the R. leading upstairs (stairs may be visible if desired) and the L. leading to the dining room.*

In the upper L. corner of the stage is the hotel office desk, with mail-box, keys, register, stationery, etc. Behind this desk, and concealed from the audience, is a trap-door supposed to lead to the basement. If the trap is not easily arranged, it could be simulated by the performer, who is supposed to descend into the basement, bending his knees and gradually disappearing, finally crawling out of a concealed hole in upper L. corner.

A large fireplace, preferably of rough stone, appears at R. midway between footlights and the door R. A large window appears in upper R. corner, showing mountains beyond. This window is about two feet from the floor and must be arranged to be easy of access as several characters make quick exits through it. Tapestry curtains are draped in front of the window and over entrances R. and L. Fur rugs on the floor.

For furniture use a bark-covered rustic porch set if possible. Large settle faces fireplace. Rustic table

up R. with small chair before it and a telephone on it. This table is concealed by a three-paneled screen. Larger table down L. C. Rocking chair R. C. Several rustic chairs around the stage.

Pots of bright flowers, palms, etc., appear at convenient nooks. Stag horns and a few framed pictures on walls. Small office safe near desk. And-irons, fender, etc., in front of fireplace.

Lights on full throughout the first act. Stage well illuminated by foots and borders, as the time is mid-afternoon. Strong bunch of yellows shine through the window and C. D.

Discovered: SKEET KELLY seated back of desk up L., sound asleep with his head on the desk. His right arm is in a sling. MISS LOGANBERRY is seated in rocking-chair at R. C., knitting a red woolen sock, and DIANA GARWOOD is seated on the settle half facing the fire and half facing the audience. She is reading a magazine.

The curtain rises to orchestral music, "Farewell to Thee ("Aloha Oe"), the national song of Hawaii. Bird calls are heard and the distant clamor of cowbells.

Enter IRA J. STONE from C. D., wearing auto cap, coat and gloves. He advances briskly to the desk.

SKEET KELLY.

(Gives a subdued snore.)

Ah, hum! (End music.)

IRA J. STONE.

(Raps briskly on the desk.)

Hello, hello! Is anybody home?

SKEET.

(Awakens suddenly, rubs eyes, yawns and stretches.)

I'm home. Jest as I was goin' to fall heir to fifty million dollars and marry the lady of me choice, I gotta go and wake up.

STONE.

(Sharply.)

What are you doing, running a summer hotel or a sleeping car on the C. & A.?

SKEET.

Aw, who's lettin' off all that steam? Whatcher think y' are, the twelve o'clock whistle?

STONE.

I want Room 10.

SKEET.

(Pushes the register toward him.)

Go as far as y' like. It ain't nailed down.

(STONE registers. DIANA comes down R. to Miss L.)

MISS LOGANBERRY.

That's Ira J. Stone from the village. Tremendously rich but horribly vulgar. A perfect barbarian. (Starts to rise.) I'll introduce you.

DIANA GARWOOD.

Is he the man who treated Mollie Macklin, our little housekeeper, so shamefully?

MISS L.

(Knitting.)

Yes. They were engaged, but when he found out that old Mr. Gilmore didn't leave her any stock in the Furniture Factory he—(pauses).

DIANA.

(Completing the sentence with withering scorn.)

He jilted her and broke the heart of one of the finest girls I ever met. That's the kind of a man he is.

MISS L.

He owns forty shares of stock in the Furniture Company and used to be the general manager until old Mr. Gilmore caught him in some underhanded work and discharged him. He's up here for the directors' meeting tomorrow and will probably stay sometime. You'd better let me introduce him.

(Before DIANA has time to reply, STONE comes down L. C. to Miss L.)

STONE.

(Pleasantly.)

Ah, Miss Loganberry, still knitting for the heathen?

MISS L.

(Sharply.)

Yes. Is there anything I can make for you?

STONE.

(Not catching the fling.)

Beg pardon?

SKEET.

(Laughs.)

Ha, ha! Did you hear that? She landed one right on his solar plexus.

STONE.

Oh, you mean that I'm a heathen? (Laughs in a forced manner.) That's good. Awfully clever. (Glances at DIANA, then back to Miss L.) Well, if you want to make something for me, you might make an introduction. (Smiles at DIANA.)

DIANA.

(*Turns her back to him, walks to rear, then to desk.*)

Oh, Skeet, would you mind telling me the correct time? My watch has stopped. (*She converses with SKEET in pantomime.*)

STONE.

(*After a slight pause.*)

Hm! Well, what do you know about that? Who is the high and mighty princess, anyhow?

MISS L.

I suppose you are referring to Miss Garwood.

STONE.

(*Surprised.*)

Not the rich Diana Garwood?

MISS L.

(*Pointedly.*)

The rich *Miss* Diana Garwood.

STONE.

Good. I got to make her acquaintance. She owns five shares in the Furniture Company, inherited them last year from her mother's folks, and she's worth nearly two million. Yes, I'll have to meet Miss Garwood. Her five votes may come in handy at the stockholders' meeting tomorrow. (*Turns up L. toward SKEET.*) Boy! (*Pause, then louder.*) Boy! (*SKEET pays no attention to him.*) Front!

SKEET.

(*Calmly.*)

The boy ain't here. He's off taking his annual vacation in the Holy Land. You'll find your room up one flight, second door to the left. (*Talks in pantomime to DIANA.*)

STONE.

That's the usual accommodation one gets in this hole. (*Crosses to R. E.*) You'll find a traveling bag in my car. Bring it up to my room, and don't be all day about it. (*Exits R., banging door.*)

MISS L.

(*Rising.*)

Ugh! I can't tolerate that man. The last time he was here my Gertrude took a terrible dislike to him. (*Crossing to R. E.*) They simply couldn't get along together at all, and every one knows that Gertrude has the disposition of an angel. He saw her in the hall one day and deliberately stepped on her tail. She bit him in the vestibule and they haven't been on friendly terms since. (*Exit R.*)

SKEET.

(*Comes down L. from behind desk.*)

Did you hear what that fish called me? Boy! I'd like to put a head on him.

DIANA.

(*Comes down R. C.*)

I'm surprised that he'd have the front to come here to the Rip Van Winkle Inn. I should think he'd be ashamed to look honest Mollie Macklin in the face.

SKEET.

(*Comes down to her L.*)

Why?

DIANA.

Didn't you know? He was the man Mollie was engaged to.

SKEET.

I never knew she was engaged to any man.

DIANA.

It was broken off. He expected old Mr. Gilmore to leave her the shares in the Furniture Company, because she had managed the hotel for him and worked hard taking care of him for fifteen years. When Stone found she wasn't mentioned in Mr. Gilmore's will he told Mollie that a marriage to her was impossible and hasn't been near her since.

SKEET.

(*After a pause looks at right arm.*)

And me with me right mitt in a sling. I gotta notion to beat him up anyway. So he t'rowed her down, did he? The rat! I'd like to hammer him to a jelly and then fling him at her feet.

DIANA.

It was a lucky escape for Mollie. She's too good a girl to throw herself away on such a cad. She's a girl in a million.

SKEET.

(*Grasps her right hand with his left and shakes it.*)

Thank y', miss. Thank y' for them words.

DIANA.

(*Surprised.*)

Why, Skeet, what is it?

SKEET.

(*Bashfully twists his left foot around and looks at it, grinning.*)

Hm?

DIANA.

(*Amused.*)

What's the matter with you?

SKEET.

I dunno what it is. I'm jes' like the liberty bell, I guess—cracked clean across.

DIANA.

You're not in love with Mollie, are you? (Pause.)
Are you, Skeet?

SKEET.

I dunno what y' call it, but every time she looks at me, gee! I feel jes' like a mule kicked in the left side a' me chest.

DIANA.

How did you happen to come up here to work, Skeet? You're from the city, aren't you?

SKEET.

Sure. I come up here with a tunnel gang, but I had a accident over on the hill and Miss Mollie gave me a job here when the Inn opened Monday.

DIANA.

What kind of an accident?

SKEET.

We had a cave-in at the end of the tunnel, and I caved in with it. I fell about twenty feet; but that wasn't the worst. You see the men in the tunnel was blasting and I fell right alongside of a lighted fuse.

DIANA.

(Alarmed.)

Skeet!

SKEET.

(Seriously.)

Y' see I was workin' up above with the boss when all of a sudden the top caved in and I landed twenty feet below with me arm twisted under like that. (Illustrates with left arm.) I was stunned by the fall, but I could smell the smoke of the burning fuse. The charge of dynamite wasn't more'n two feet from m' face. Gee, miss, I shut m' eyes and tried to think, but I couldn't think. I tried to shout, but the words

wouldn't come—and all the time the fuse was burnin' closer and closer to the keg. I heard someone holler high overhead and then the boss slid down on a rope, facing death every second of the time. He grabbed me and they pulled us up. He was just in time. A minute later the charge exploded and blew out the whole end of the tunnel.

DIANA.

(*Enthusiastically.*)

Oh, Skeet, it was grand. He was a hero. He saved your life at the risk of his own. I never heard of anything so noble.

SKEET.

There ain't nothin' I wouldn't do fer him, miss. Why, I'd cut off my right arm this minute if the boss wanted me to.

Enter AUNT JUBILEE from L.

AUNT JUBILEE.

(*At L.*)

'Scuse me, Mistah Skeet, but is any ob you-all done seen Miss Mollie?

SKEET.

She grabbed the little tin-lizzie by the horns, give it a kick and pushed the button. Honk! Honk! Down at the station.

AUNT J.

(*Puzzled.*)

Grabbed Lizzie who?

SKEET.

(*At L. C.*)

The joy wagon, the gasoline cart, the baby rattle, the coal-hod on wheels, the two-by-four! Get me?

AUNT J.

Two-by-four? Boy, what kinda talk you talkin' to me?

SKEET.

Gee, I gotta talk kindergarten to you. She took the automobile and drove it over to the station to meet the five o'clock train.

AUNT J.

I'm habin' a little trouble wif dat ole range in d' kitchin. It don't draw and it's smokin' sumpin spasmodic.

SKEET.

What's the matter with it?

AUNT J.

'Deed and I dunno whether it's de disintegrity ob d' stove-pipe, or if d' flue done got supercruscated.

SKEET.

Stir yer talk, auntie; stir yer talk; it's gettin' lumpy.

AUNT J.

If I's gotta talk kindergarten to you, den d' range is smokin'.

SKEET.

No smokin' allowed in the kitchen. I'll go out and see what the trouble is. I'm the original little range-fixier from Hoboken. (*Dramatically.*) Fair daughter of the desert, I will lead the way, and fix the range before another day. (*Stalks out at L.*)

AUNT J.

(*Looks after him, pauses.*)

Dat boy's gettin' too familiaritous with me, and he's gotta stop it. 'Kase if he don't I'm gwine to bust him on de head with a flat-iron. (*Exit L., muttering to herself.*)

MR. MAN appears at C. D. from R. He comes down L. C. and looks at DIANA, who is seated R. C. absorbed in thought.

MR. MAN.

Excuse me, is Skeet Kelly anywhere around?

DIANA.

(Who started at the sound of his voice.)

Oh, how you startled me.

MAN.

(Smiles.)

I'm sorry.

DIANA.

I'm nervous this afternoon. I just heard a story that affected me very much. It happened over there at the new tunnel. Have you seen it?

MAN.

Yes. I helped dig it.

DIANA.

There was an accident, a cave-in. Is that right?

MAN.

(Smiles.)

It isn't right, but it happens occasionally.

DIANA.

Skeet fell down into the tunnel right near a keg of dynamite, and the manager went down and rescued him, facing death at every second. Wasn't that glorious? He must be a man among men. (Pause, she looks at him.) Isn't he?

MAN.

Well—er—(hesitates) he's a man, all right.

DIANA.

You don't seem very enthusiastic. I think it was wonderful. I call him a hero, don't you?

MAN.

I've heard him called worse things than that.

DIANA.

Such nerve, such presence of mind, such strength. He went down there all alone and brought Skeet up to safety.

MAN.

Yes, I know about it.

DIANA.

Do you know him?

MAN.

Yes.

DIANA.

Intimately?

MAN.

Rather intimately.

DIANA.

I wonder if you'd take a message to him. A message from me.

MAN.

A message?

DIANA.

Yes. Tell him that a girl whom he doesn't know and whom he probably never will meet thinks that his action is worthy of a Carnegie medal. Tell him I think he is a man among men and that I am proud to belong to a country that breeds such men. (Pause.) You'll tell him, won't you?

MAN.

(*Looking at her earnestly, much impressed, speaks slowly.*)

Yes, I'll tell him.

DIANA.

Thank you. (*Changes tone.*) I think Skeet is in the kitchen. I'll find him for you. (*Exits L.*)

MAN.

(*Looks after her, pauses, slowly smiles.*)

Proud to belong to a country that breeds such men. (*Throws his shoulders back.*) Yes, I'll tell him. (*Crosses to door L., looking out after DIANA.*)

Enter JIM RYKER from *R.* He goes to the desk and looks at the register.

JIM RYKER.

I wonder if Ted got in on the evening train. (*Comes down C.*)

MAN.

(*Comes to *L. C.*, recognizes JIM.*)

Jim Ryker!

JIM.

Well, by George! (*They shake hands heartily.*)

MAN.

Are you alive?

JIM.

Quite.

MAN.

But I heard you had been drowned in Honolulu.

JIM.

Yes, that's what everybody heard. In Honolulu they still believe it is true.

MAN.

Is your wife with you?

JIM.

(*Glances around *L.* and *R.*, comes close to MAN and speaks confidentially.*)

Not my wife, my widow.

MAN.

Widow?

JIM.

That's the reason I was drowned.

MAN.

I don't understand. JIM.

(Earnestly.)

Old man, take a little tip from me. Don't ever marry a Honolulu widow. I stood it as long as I could, three months, to be exact, and then one dark and stormy night I (*careless gesture with both hands*) mysteriously disappeared.

MAN.

Then it was all a fake?

JIM.

It was the only way I could get rid of her. You know these widows; they hang on like grim death. There was no chance for a divorce. She wouldn't think of a separation, so I just got drowned. That was the easiest way out. One night I went in swimming and the next morning they found my clothes on the beach. In the meantime I caught a vessel and returned to the States at once.

MAN.

Why were you so anxious to get rid of her?

JIM.

She was too affectionate. Every night she used to get her little ukulele and sing (*sings*) "Farewell to thee, farewell to thee." That's what gave me the idea. I thought I'd give her something to sing farewell about.

MAN.

Maybe she'll follow you over here.

JIM.

Oh, no. She'll never learn that I'm alive. She's probably singing "Farewell to Thee" to somebody else now.

MAN.

I should think she would have been suspicious when the body didn't turn up.

JIM.

Not at all. She thinks that I furnished the salad course for the meal of an avaricious but well meaning shark.

MAN.

Are you going back to her?

JIM.

Back to her? After all the trouble I've taken to provide her with widow's weeds and black crepe? I should say not. Half the world is between us and that's the way I want it to be. I'm here in the Catskill Mountains and she is probably singing "Farewell to Thee" to some other poor sucker in the moonlight on the shore at Waikiki (*pronounced Wah-ka-kee'*).

MAN.

I'm awfully glad to see you, old man. I suppose you're making a big success as a lawyer?

JIM.

Oh, I manage to keep the wolf from the door. But what are you doing dressed up like that?

MAN.

I'm an engineer.

JIM.

A civil engineer?

MAN.

Well, I'm not as civil as I might be. The governor wanted me to begin at the bottom of the ladder, so he sent me up here with a gang of men to tunnel a hole through the mountain.

JIM.

How do you like it?

MAN.

Not bad. We finished the job this morning, so now I'm free to do what I like. I think I'll stay here at the Inn for awhile.

JIM.

That's right. It's a fine old place.

MAN.

There are several attractions for me here.

JIM.

Attractions?

MAN.

I mean the mountain air and other considerations.

JIM.

The other considerations consist of an old maid, a negro cook, a housekeeper and Miss Diana Garwood.

MAN.

Diana Garwood! So that was Diana Garwood.

JIM.

Yes. Don't you know her?

MAN.

No, I never saw her before today. I've been knocking about the West ever since college. And then her family and my family are not exactly (*hesitates*).

JIM.

She's Senator M'Corkle's niece.

MAN.

Yes, I know, and the Senator and my governor haven't been looking at each other for twenty years. They fell out over a law suit years ago and never fell in again.

JIM.

Miss Garwood is a wonderful girl.

MAN.

(Slowly.)

She is—a wonderful girl.

JIM.

But cold as an iceberg. She won't have anything to do with men.

MAN.

Perhaps she hasn't met *the* man yet.

JIM.

She's worth about two million.

MAN.

Not much chance for a civil engineer, is there? Especially if he's not very civil.

JIM.

Say, you've got it bad. Come up to my room and have a Romany Rye.

MAN.

I thought the world had gone dry.

JIM.

It has. But a little persuasion can dampen things up a bit. They serve their Romany Ryes in tea-cups nowadays.

Enter SKEET from L.

SKEET.

(At L.)

The boss! (*Shakes hands at C. with MAN.*) Gee, I'm glad to see you. How's everything over at the tunnel?

MAN.

Finished the job this morning. The men are leaving tonight. Do you want to go back to New York?

SKEET.

I should say not. I'm perfectly satisfied with the mountains.

MAN.

You're the clerk here, aren't you, Skeet?

SKEET.

(*Swells up.*)

D' sekketery. That's me. I'm th' sekketery.

MAN.

I suppose you have a room for me?

SKEET.

Sure, we have. You kin have the whole house if you want it. I'll give you the bridal chamber. (*Goes to R.*) It's up this way. Here, let me carry yer grip.

Enter AUNT J. from L. with basket.

AUNT J.

Mistah Skeet!

SKEET.

Yeh. I got you. (*Crosses to her.*) What can I do for you now, my little mahogany mermaid?

AUNT J.

Please, sah, kin you git me a basketful o' 'taters from down in de basement. De perpendicularity ob dem basement steps is kinder exasperatin' to d' roundity ob mah latitude.

SKEET.

Just a minute, Juliet, until I show this gent to his room.

JIM.

Never mind, Skeet. Give me the key. I'll show him up. Come on. (*Exit R.*)

MAN.

Skeet, if you go down in the basement, look out for the rotundity of your latitude. (*Laughs and exists R.*)

SKEET.

Gimme the basket. (*Takes it, goes behind counter and goes down through the trap. See note at the beginning of act.*)

AUNT J.

He's a man, he is, and he ain't afraid to go down in dat basement in de dark. But I's done heerd noises and rattles and groans down in dat basement, and dis yere cullud lady ain't gwine to trust herself among spooks.

Enter Miss L. from R., wearing trailing dinner dress.

MISS L.

Has he come yet, Aunt Jubilee?

AUNT J.

No'm, not yet. Dem 'taters is way in de back part ob de basement.

MISS L.

I mean Ted.

AUNT J.

No'm, I don't reckon he's come, neither. Miss Mollie done drove over in de tin-lizzie two-by-four to meet him at de depot.

MISS L.

Oh, I'm so impatient. How do I look, Aunt Jubilee? How do you like my new dinner costume? (*Revolves slowly.*)

AUNT J.

Mighty perpendicular, mighty perpendicular. Dat cert'n'y am a lovely cos-toom.

MISS L.

I had it made for him. For Teddy. He hasn't seen me for over seven years, but he'll remember, he'll remember.

SKEET comes up from trap with basket.

SKEET.

(Handing basket to AUNT J.)

There, my little Killarney shamrock, there's the spuds.

AUNT J.

Don't you git so pestiferous wif me, boy, 'kase if you do, I'm liable to exasperate you.

SKEET.

Back to the kitchen, Tessie Bell, you talk like a load of hay.

AUNT J.

I might be a load ob hay, boy, but I cert'n'y ain' gwine to be took in by no young rake like you.
(Tosses head airily and exits L.)

MISS L.

(At R.)

Skeet, is the afternoon train on time?

SKEET.

Yes'm, it's been in twenty minutes.

MISS L.

Oh, I wonder if anything could have happened to Teddy. Hadn't you better go over to the station and see?

SKEET.

Maybe Miss Mollic had a puncture.

MISS L.

(Blankly.)

A puncture? Miss Mollie?

SKEET.

I mean the car. Maybe the car had a puncture.

MISS L.

Skeet, I want you to do me a favor.

SKEET.

What is it?

MISS L.

As soon as Mr. Ted arrives I want you to take him aside and tell him, just casually you know, that I am here.

SKEET.

Tell him you're here. I got y'. Anything else?

(Honk of auto horn outside C.)

MISS L.

That must be Mollie now. Oh, I can't see him, I'm so nervous.

MOLLIE MACKLIN.

(Outside C.)

Skeet!

SKEET.

Yes'm. (Exits C. D. to R.)

MISS L.

I can't meet him now. I'm too upset. Be still, my little fluttering heart, be still. I'll go to my room and compose myself. Ah, Teddy's home at last, at last. (Exits R.)

MOLLIE MACKLIN appears at C. D. She speaks over her shoulder and comes down L.

MOLLIE.

Come in and make yourself at home.

HENRIETTA DARBY enters C. D., followed by SKEET, carrying large grip.

HENRIETTA DARBY.

(Near desk.)

Thank you. MOLLIE.

Skeet, take the lady's grip to Parlor B.

SKEET.

I see, B. (At rear C.)

MOLLIE.

Not I, C, B, just letter B.

SKEET.

Let 'er be! Gee, I ain't even smiled at her yet.

(HENRIETTA registers.)

MOLLIE.

Skeet, have you heard anything of Ted Gilmore?

SKEET.

Not a word. I thought he was coming with you.

MOLLIE.

So did I. And that's the last train tonight. Oh, just wait till I lay hands on that boy, that's all. He makes me so mad. (Has removed her hat and jabs it with hatpins viciously as she speaks.)

SKEET.

(A little closer to her.)

That other bird's here.

MOLLIE.

What bird? SKEET.

Party by name of Stone. (MOLLIE registers anger.) He's a fresh fish, ain't he? I put him in Room 10.

MOLLIE.

(Fiercely.)

I'd like to put him behind the bars for life.

HENRIETTA.

(Comes down R., looking around.)

What a pretty place.

MOLLIE.

(Goes back of desk, removes coat, gloves, etc.)

Yes, it is.

HENRIETTA.

I believe I'll go up to my room.

MOLLIE.

(Takes key from rack and gives it to SKEET.)

Skeet, show Miss Darby up.

HENRIETTA.

Thank you.

SKEET.

(Crosses to door R. with funny walk.)

Walk this way.

HENRIETTA.

(Laughs.)

Walk that way? I couldn't if I tried.

SKEET.

(To audience.)

Gee, she's a live one, all right, all right. I guess this job of hotel clerk's goin' to be worth the money, even if I don't git a cent.

HENRIETTA.

What is the rate for Parlor B?

MOLLIE.

Five dollars a day.

HENRIETTA.

Isn't that a little high?

SKEET.

(At door R.)

We have to be high. It's a high mountain.

HENRIETTA.

(Down to him a little.)

It must be awfully cold up here in the winter.

Don't you find it so?

SKEET.

Who? Me? No'm, not at all. I live right on top of the range, the mountain range.

HENRIETTA.

(Laughs.)

I believe you and I are going to be real good friends.

SKEET.

I'm always friends with every pretty girl I meet.

HENRIETTA.

(Laughs.)

Girl! Now I'm sure we'll be friends, Mr. Skeet.

SKEET.

Aw, tie a can on that mister stuff. To me friends I'm just plain Skeet.

MOLLIE.

We serve dinner in about forty-five minutes. You'd better get a gait on, Skeet.

SKEET.

Jellix, I'll bet a doughnut. This way, Miss.

(Exit R.)

HENRIETTA.

Do we have to dress for dinner?

MOLLIE.

We generally do.

HENRIETTA.

Are there any men here?

MOLLIE.

Yes, there's one so far. And a party named Stone.

HENRIETTA.

Stone is evidently not a very close friend.

MOLLIE.

Close? Take it from me, he's the closest man you ever saw.

HENRIETTA.

What was that large building we passed about half way up the mountain?

MOLLIE.

That was Minerva Seminary.

HENRIETTA.

Oh, a fashionable college, I suppose.

MOLLIE.

They call it a finishing school. It teaches young ladies how to finish persons who aren't their social equals.

HENRIETTA.

Well, if dinner is to be at six, I'll have to hurry.
(Exits R.)

Soft music in orchestra, "Farewell to Thee."
MOLLIE sighs, slowly crosses over to fireplace and looks in the fire pensively. She sighs again. Enter STONE from R. in dinner clothes. He starts to exit at C. and then sees MOLLIE, who has her back toward him. He removes his hat and comes toward her with extended hand.

STONE.

Ah, Mollie. (MOLLIE starts a little, straightens up and turns toward him, looking down.) I see you're still at the old Inn. It's been sometime since I saw you. (She slowly raises her eyes until they meet his, she gazes at him steadily, sadly. There is a pause. He turns away slightly.) I don't bear you any hard feelings, Mollie. In fact there isn't any reason on earth why we shouldn't be friends. (She turns her head away, but is silent.) Of course things didn't turn out as I expected.

MOLLIE.

(*Bitterly, in a low pitch.*)

No, I wasn't mentioned in the will.

STONE.

(*At R. C.*)

We'd never have been happy together as man and wife, struggling along on a miserable pittance. I'm a poor man, Mollie.

MOLLIE.

(*With a double meaning.*)

Yes, you *are* a poor man.

STONE.

(*Takes a step toward her.*)

Can't we be friends?

MOLLIE.

No.

STONE.

I'm sorry if I have offended you.

MOLLIE.

(*Sadly but steadily.*)

Sorry? No, you're not sorry. The only thing you regret is that old Mr. Gilmore didn't leave me the controlling interest in the Furniture Factory. You never cared for me, all you thought about was the old gentleman's money. Sorry! You've never been sorry in your whole life, Ira Stone. You don't know the meaning of the word.

Enter SKEET from C. D. He goes back of desk unobserved.

STONE.

I only acted for the best.

MOLLIE.

(*Bitterly.*)

Yes, you acted. It was all acting from the very beginning. I thought you cared for me. I was a fool. Your every look, your every action, your every word was—a—lie! (*End music.*)

STONE.

Well, I'm not here to argue with you. It's no use to bandy words with a woman. They're all pretty playthings, but they won't listen to reason.

MOLLIE.

(*Slowly, bitterly.*)

Yes, pretty playthings to amuse you for an hour, and then to be tossed aside like a broken toy, with never a glance, never a word of kindness, never a thought of a woman's breaking heart. (*Turns, leans on fireplace and sobs.*)

STONE.

(*Turns up C. D., turning to R. away from SKEET.*)

Well, if you won't listen to me—

MOLLIE.

(*Faces him, speaking loudly.*)

Listen to you? I *did* listen to you! I trusted you and believed in you—and now! (*Turns away sobbing.*)

STONE.

You'll feel better in the morning, Mollie. You're nervous tonight. I'll stroll out in the garden and keep a lookout for the coming heir. This is his last night of grace. If Ted Gilmore doesn't sign the directors' book by midnight, he'll lose his fifty votes at the meeting tomorrow and the Furniture Factory

will be moved to the city. (*Rubs his hands gleefully.*) Then I will be in control once more and be able to run things to suit myself. He's got to be here by midnight and the last train's in. The young man evidently doesn't care a hang about the factory his grandfather built up. No sentiment at all. Too bad, too bad. (*Strolls out C. D. and off R.*)

MOLLIE *sobs softly with her face against mantel.*

SKEET *comes to R. C.*

SKEET.

(Sympathetically.)

What's the matter, Mollie?

MOLLIE.

(Looks up, tearfully.)

N-othing.

SKEET.

Did that guy say anything to you, Mollie?

MOLLIE.

No, it isn't that.

SKEET.

Are you still worrying about him? (*Pause.*) Ain't there something I can do? You're all alone, Mollie, and something's bothering you. Let me help you. I know I ain't much but, gee, I'd do anything in the world fer you.

MOLLIE.

You can't help me, Skeet. There isn't any help. This is the end, I guess. There's only one thing left for me to do, to go away.

SKEET.

Go away?

MOLLIE.

Yes, I want to see new places, new faces. I want to go where I'll meet new people, people who won't

pity me, people who'll allow me to live in peace and forget my troubles. **SKEET.**

Gee, do you care for him as much as that?

MOLLIE.

Care for him? For Ira Stone? I hate him! I don't give him a thought. It isn't that, it's something else. (*Crosses to L.*)

SKEET.

(*Goes to L. C.*)

And ain't there nothin' I can do?

MOLLIE.

No. There's nothing anyone can do, except Ted Gilmore.

SKEET.

What's he got to do with it?

MOLLIE.

He's got to be here tonight. He's got to sign his name in the directors' book in order to control the meeting tomorrow. He wrote last week from New York saying he'd be here without fail, and now the last train is in and it's too late.

SKEET.

What does he have to sign?

MOLLIE.

It's this way. Old Mr. Gilmore built up his Furniture Factory inch by inch, dollar by dollar, until today it's worth more than a million. Every two years there is a stockholders' meeting and there's a clause in the by-laws of the company that says every one, in order to vote, owning stock in the company, must register the day before the meeting. When the old gentleman died he left the controlling shares to his grandson Teddy, but if he doesn't show up

tonight Ira J. Stone will be able to control the meeting tomorrow and do what he likes with the factory. That's what worries me. That's why I want to go away.

SKEET.

But what can Stone do?

MOLLIE.

He wants to move the factory to the city. He wants to throw my father and all the men of the village out of employment, he wants to tear down the old place and elect himself manager of the new concern. You see he has forty votes, one vote for each share of stock.

SKEET.

How many votes does the other fellow have?

MOLLIE.

Ted? He has fifty, the controlling interest. But what good will they do him if he's not here tonight to register? Oh, he makes me so mad.

SKEET.

What makes you so interested in it, Mollie?

MOLLIE.

If Ira Stone once gets charge of the company he'll undo everything the old gentleman spent a lifetime in trying to build up. Old Mr. Gilmore was as good as a father to me for fifteen years. He owned the Inn and made me the manager, he made my father the assistant boss of the second shop. Oh, he was wonderful to us! The day before he died he called me to him and said, "Mollie, I'm leaving everything to my grandson Teddy. I haven't seen him in seven years and folks say he's pretty wild; but when he assumes charge of the big Furniture Factory that'll settle him down, won't it? I want you to stand by him, Mollie!" That's what he said. "I

want you to stand by him and don't let him move the factory to the city! Stand by my boy and stand by the old factory!" I gave him my promise and I meant to do it, but now—(*puts handkerchief to eyes and sobs softly*).

SKEET.

Maybe he'll turn up yet.

MOLLIE.

No, it's too late. The lawyer is here to get his signature. Oh, I don't know what to do.

SKEET.

Why does Stone want to move the factory to the city?

MOLLIE.

Spite work. Stone used to be manager for old Mr. Gilmore, but he wasn't honest and Mr. Gilmore found it out and discharged him. Then Stone went around and bought up every share of stock he could find. He has forty shares now and if Ted doesn't come home Stone will elect the board of directors and vote himself president of the company and move the factory.

SKEET.

But suppose Ted *does* come home.

MOLLIE.

Oh, if he only would.

SKEET.

What would he have to do?

MOLLIE.

Just go to Mr. Ryker, the attorney, and sign the register. Then he'll have fifty votes and can do as old Mr. Gilmore directed in his will.

SKEET.

I wonder why he ain't here.

MOLLIE.

So do I.

SKEET.

Something must 'a happened to him.

MOLLIE.

There's no excuse for it. Mr. Ryker wrote him a letter and explained everything and Ted promised to come home in time to sign the register.

SKEET.

Maybe he got lost in the shuffle.

MOLLIE.

If he has then Ira Stone wins and I leave for the city tomorrow.

SKEET.

Gee! We can't allow nothin' like that to happen.

MOLLIE.

There's nothing else for me to do.

SKEET.

Couldn't we kidnap the lawyer?

MOLLIE.

No. He's upstairs waiting for Ted to come home. (*Looks at watch.*) It's only six hours to midnight and I can't do a thing. I love the big factory just like a child. I watched it grow from one little building to three, then to eight, and now it covers twenty town lots—it's my town's factory, my factory, and I can't do a thing but just sit here and see it go to ruin before my very eyes.

Enter Miss L. from R.

Miss L.

(*At R.*)

Oh, Mollie, I'm so excited. I've seen him. I was peeping out of the door of my room and he went down the hall.

MOLLIE.

(At L.)

He—who?

MISS L.

(Coming to R. C.)

Why, Ted, of course.

MOLLIE.

Ted? Ted Gilmore?

MISS L.

Of course. I'd know him among a million. Tell me, am I too pale? MOLLIE.

(Goes to her.)

You're all right. Quick, which way did he go?

MISS L.

He went with Skeet.

SKEET.

(At L.)

With me?

MISS L.

Oh, Mollie, do you think he'll know me? Do you think I've changed much in the past seven years?

MOLLIE.

(Hesitates.)

Well, you've changed a little.

MISS L.

He was only fifteen then, and I was his teacher. He gave me his picture and said that he'd never forget me. And now he's coming back. Coming back, after all these years. I've been waiting for this night for the past seven years.

MOLLIE.

That's an awful long wait.

MISS L.

(At R.)

He will remember. I'm afraid I'm too pale. I wonder if I shouldn't put a little more color in my cheeks. I used to have such lovely cheeks. (At door R.) I'll do it, but don't you tell. Oh, I'm so excited. (Bustles out at R.)

MOLLIE.

(Turning to SKEET.)

What did she mean, Skeet? Is he really here?

SKEET.

Naw, she dunno what she's talking about.

MOLLIE.

(Down C.)

She said he was with you.

SKEET.

That wasn't him. That was me boss over at the tunnel. The man who pulled me out. (Goes up C.)

MOLLIE.

(Down L.)

Then it's all over. It's—all—over!

Enter MAN from R. wearing dinner clothes. He crosses to SKEET, not seeing MOLLIE, who is down L.

MAN.

Say, Skeet, when do we eat?

SKEET.

(Comes down a little L. C.)

This is him

MOLLIE.

(At L.)

Oh, how much he looks like Ted.

MAN.

(At R. C.)

I beg pardon?

MOLLIE.

A little taller and heavier maybe. I have his picture up in my room. He sent it to his grandfather two years ago.

SKEET.

Maybe the boss could help us out'n our troubles.

MOLLIE.

Oh, if he only could! Ted will surely be home tomorrow, but somebody must see the attorney tonight. If we can put that over and Ted turns up tomorrow everything will be all right.

MAN.

(Puzzled.)

I don't believe I catch the meaning of your drift.

SKEET.

(Comes between them.)

Y' see, it's like this. Miss Mollie here is up agin it fer fair. She's a girl in a million, she is. Y' see there's a young feller who's got to show up tonight and sign a book so's he kin take charge of the shooting gallery.

MAN.

The shooting gallery?

SKEET.

I mean the Furniture Factory. He's gotta be here tonight, 'cause if he ain't it's over the hills to the poor-house for us. Get me?

MAN.

Well, not quite.

SKEET.

There's a lawyer guy here with a book that the

young feller's got to sign. And it's got to be did tonight.

MAN.

Now I'm beginning to understand.

SKEET.

'Cause if it ain't, there's a fish here named Stone who done us dirt. He's tryin' to git control of the factory and move it away to the city, er sump'm.

MOLLIE.

If young Mr. Gilmore doesn't show up tonight he won't be able to vote at the directors' meeting to-morrow.

SKEET.

Now what she wants is fer you to pertend that you're the guy. See?

MAN.

I think I do. She wants me to pretend that I am young Mr. Gilmore. Is that it?

SKEET.

Fine. You got a wonderful head fer facts.

MAN.

But isn't there anyone around here who is acquainted with the young man?

MOLLIE.

Nobody but Miss Loganberry and she hasn't seen him in seven years. She's under the impression that you are him anyway.

MAN.

And no one else knows him?

MOLLIE.

No. (*Goes to Man.*) I could take you to the attorney's room tonight with the lights turned low and all you have to do is to let him see you and sign the book.

SKEET.

And in the meantime I'll present him with six or seven Romany Ryes with the compliments of the house. He's clean dippy about that Scotch stuff. He's had twelve already.

MOLLIE.

(Earnestly to MAN.)

You won't need to meet any of the other guests and Ted will be here on the noon train tomorrow. He wrote and said he'd be here sure but he must have missed connections. Will you do it, sir? Will you help us out? Oh, you don't know how much this means to me.

SKEET.

(Comes down to MAN's R.)

It means a lot to me, too.

MAN.

I've got a big notion to do it. It will give me a chance to meet the guests, won't it?

MOLLIE.

Certainly.

MAN.

Then you can count me in. Ring all the bells and kill the fatted calf, the prodigal's come home.

MOLLIE.

But do you think we can put it over on the attorney, Skeet? He's an awful smart man.

SKEET.

Don't worry about him. After he tackles my Romany Ryes he won't know his own grandmother.

MOLLIE.

I'll go upstairs and try to persuade Miss Loganberry to stay in her room.

SKEET.

I've got it! I'll feed her little dog Gertrude a couple o' Romany Ryes and that'll keep the old lady busy from now till midnight. (*Exit L.*)

MOLLIE.

You certainly have taken a load off of my mind, sir. I want you to know how grateful I am.

MAN.

Oh, that's all right.

*Enter HENRIETTA from R. in brilliant dinner dress.
She carries a ukulele.*

HENRIETTA.

Am I too early?

MOLLIE.

Not at all. Miss Darby, let me present Mr. Gilmore. Mr. Gilmore of the Furniture Company.

HENRIETTA.

Oh! So pleased. (*Shakes hands with MAN.*) So you are one of the natives? I know I'm going to love it here. The scenery here is wonderful. It reminds me of Honolulu.

MOLLIE.

(*Pointing up L.*)

You can see clear down in the valley from that veranda.

HENRIETTA.

How wonderful. (*To MAN.*) Will you show me the view? It's part of the attraction of the Inn, isn't it?

MAN.

Delighted. (*Offers his arm and they stroll out C. D. and off L.*)

MOLLIE.

I didn't think we could put it over, but we have. We have! And now Mr. Ira Stone I think you'll wait quite a little while before you start tearing down the factory.

Enter SKEET from L. carrying four pink lemonades with mint, cherries, straws, etc., on tray.

SKEET.

I caught little Gertrude in the entry and fed her a couple o' Romany Ryes with a teaspoon. Take it from me, Gertrude never had such a feed in her young life. She's frisky enough to bite a Boston bull.

MOLLIE.

(At R. C.)

What will Miss Loganberry say?

SKEET.

She said it already. She thinks Gertrude bit Ira Stone and caught the distemper. She put her to bed with a mustard plaster and a hot water bottle. The old lady's got a job that'll keep her upstairs the rest of the evening. Where's the boss?

MOLLIE.

Do you mean Mr. Ted?

SKEET.

Sure. Only I forgot his name.

MOLLIE.

He's out on the veranda looking at the scenery with the Honolulu humming-bird.

SKEET.

What'll I do with these? (Refers to lemonades.)

MOLLIE.

Take them up to Mr. Ryker's room.

SKEET.

I did. But I can't find him. (*Places tray on desk.*)

MOLLIE.

(*Up to him.*)

Oh, Skeet, I'm so nervous. I'll be thankful when those two men are out of the house. If they ever find out that we've deceived them and that Ted didn't get home on time—

SKEET.

(*Looking off C. D. to R.*)

Sh! Watch yer step. Here comes Ira Stone now.

Enter STONE from C. D. from R.

STONE.

(*At R. C.*)

Well, the young man hasn't showed up yet and the last train is in. It looks as if you were going to lose, Mollie.

(*Mollie turns her back on him and busies herself up stage.*)

SKEET.

(*Up C.*)

A good poker player is always sure of his hand before he stakes his little pile. Are you real sure of your hand, Stone?

STONE.

I guess I'm sure all right, for you see I hold the winning cards.

SKEET.

I've often thought that way, too. When all of a sudden up pops the little joker, and it's all off.

STONE.

I've been talking to Ryker the attorney. He says he is going back to the city tomorrow night. (*Rubs*

hands gleefully.) When I'm the president of the Furniture Company I'll begin to tear down the old shacks at once.

SKEET.

(*Sarcastically.*)

Gee, you've got it all mapped out, ain't you?

STONE.

Of course it will kill the Inn and the village, but what difference does that make? The factory men can go back to farming. We've got too many men anyhow. Our new labor-saving devices will cut down the number one-third.

MOLLIE.

(*At L. C.*)

If I were you I don't think I'd order the new furniture just yet.

STONE.

You think Ted can get here by an airship, do you? Bah, I tell you he takes no interest in the old factory. All he wants is his dividends. (*Goes to her.*) If you are real good, Mollie, I might get you a place in the new factory. I'm going to use all the girls I can. That cuts down the payroll.

MOLLIE.

(*With spirit.*)

Not for Mollie. You'll never discharge a man, Ira Stone, as long as Ted Gilmore's on earth.

(*SKEET comes down C.*)

STONE.

(*Sneers.*)

Oh, won't I?

SKEET.

(*At his R.*)

Naw, you won't!

STONE.

Young Mr. Gilmore is probably having a good time down in New York. I've heard he's a pretty gay young man. He doesn't give a hang whether the factory is moved or not.

MOLLIE.

Oh, yes he does. STONE.

(*Loudly.*)

Then why isn't he here tonight.

MOLLIE.

(*Louder.*)

He is here!

STONE.

What!

MOLLIE.

He's been here a couple of hours.

STONE.

I don't believe it.

SKEET grasps STONE back of his coat collar with L. hand, jerks him to R. with a vicious push and then takes C.

SKEET.

You say that again and someone'll have to call an ambulance.

STONE.

How did he get here? He wasn't on the train. Only one passenger got off, a lady.

MOLLIE.

He was here before the train pulled in.

STONE.

Well, I want to see him. I—

SKEET.

(*Takes his arm and leads him to door R.*)

You! You'd better make a noise like a cake of

ice and keep cool. And remember, the first train for the village leaves here tomorrow at noon.

STONE.

But, I—

SKEET.

That'll do fer you. The guests at this hotel ain't allowed to talk back to the help. You'd better run upstairs and brush your hair fer dinner. You're liable to get all mussed up if you stay down here. (*Pushes him out at R., then swaggers down to MOLLIE.*)

MOLLIE.

(*At R. C.*)

Skeet, you're all right. I don't know what I'd do if you weren't here to help me. You're a good pal, Skeet, and you're white clean through. (*Passes him going to door R., turns and looks at him giggling.* SKEET at R. C. acts bashful and giggles. MOLLIE exits R., looking back at SKEET and bumping into the door as she exits.)

SKEET.

Gee, she's a nice girl. She's a girl in a million.

Enter JIM RYKER from C. D., R. side, wearing dinner clothes and top hat.

JIM.

Hello, Skeet, I've just been taking a walk down to the lake. I thought maybe Ted might take it into his head to row across.

SKEET.

(*Takes tray to him.*)

I been a lookin' fer you. (*Extends tray.*) Here, have a Romany Rye on the house.

JIM.

Why this generosity? Is it your birthday?

SKEET.

No, sir. It's in honor of Mr. Ted. He's come home.

JIM.

That's fine. Then I think Mr. Ira Stone won't be elected general manager of the Furniture Company tomorrow.

(*Soft Music, "Farewell to Thee" on ukulele or guitar heard off C. to L.*)

SKEET.

I tell you it was a close call, but he got home just in time.

JIM.

Where is he? I want to have a good long talk with him. We haven't had a good long talk in over a year. (*SKEET's expression changes from joy to apprehension.*)

SKEET.

For over a year? (*Blankly.*) Why, I didn't know you and him ever *did* have a good long talk. I never knowed that you knew him. (*Slight pause.*) Do you?

JIM.

Why sure. He and I used to be college chums. That's why his grandfather appointed me as executor of the estate and attorney for the company.

SKEET.

(*Hesitates.*)

Would—would—er—would you know him again if you saw him?

JIM.

Know him? Why, certainly.

SKEET.

(*Wilts, then brightens up with an idea.*)

He's changed a whole lot. Honest, he's awfully changed. Here, take a couple o' Romany Ryes.

JIM.

No, thank you. I won't indulge until I've talked to Ted. (SKEET *wilts*.) I have to keep my head clear for business, you know. Where is he?

SKEET.

(*Rattled.*)

I don't know. Oh, yes I do. I think he's upstairs. Yes, he's upstairs putting a hot mustard plaster on little Gertrude. (Comes to JIM, speaking earnestly.) Are you sure you'd know him, Mr. Ryker?

JIM.

(*Positively.*)

I'd know Ted Gilmore if I met him in Heaven.

SKEET.

(*To audience.*)

Holy mackerel! I'll have to find Miss Mollie and put her wise. (To JIM.) I'll find him and send him to you—maybe!

(Puts tray on counter and runs off R.)

HENRIETTA.

(Heard off C. D. at rear singing.)

“Farewell to thee,
Farewell to thee,
Thou dearest one that dwells among the flowers!”

JIM starts in surprise. He crosses up C., listening as HENRIETTA continues singing. Enter AUNT J. from L.

AUNT J.

'Scuse me, boss, I's lookin' fo' Miss Mollie. It's time to ring de chimes fo' dinner.

JIM.

I think she's upstairs.

(HENRIETTA sings louder. JIM listens.)

AUNT J.

Yes, sah. (*Crosses to R.*)

JIM.

(*Up C.*)

Say, auntie, who is that singing?

AUNT J.

(*Waddles up C., looks off L.*)

Dat's de new lady dat come dis afternoon.

JIM.

It sounded like—but, no, that's impossible. Is her name Darby, auntie, Henrietta Darby?

AUNT J.

'Deed an' I dunno. Look at de register. (*Comes down R.*)

JIM.

I'm almost afraid to look. (*Singing grows louder, he rushes to register, opens it, turns pages rapidly, reads, jumps back in surprise.*) Jumping Jupiter, my widow! (*Grabs grip from behind counter, rushes to window, breaks glass with grip, jumps through window and exits.* During this action the singing has ceased and the same tune is played softly but in rapid tempo by orchestra.)

Enter MOLLIE from R.

MOLLIE.

What was the crash, Aunt Jubilee?

AUNT J.

(*Running around waving arms, very much excited.*)

Dat lawyer man, Mistah Ryker, he's gone plum 'stracted and crazy in d' head. He takes one look at de register, let out a yell like a hippo-peet-apotamus, bust open de window and jump through! (*Looks out of window.*)

MOLLIE.

He's in the motor car and is making a bee line for the station.

Enter SKEET from R.

SKEET.

Miss Mollie, I've been looking everywhere for you. It's all off. We've got to get another Teddy. The lawyer and him is old friends. Old college chums. He said he'd know him if he met him in Heaven. (*Rapid action and dialogue from this point. Music louder.*)

MOLLIE.

The lawyer and Ted?

SKEET.

Sure. Tell the boss it's all off. Mr. Ryker is acquainted with the real Ted.

MOLLIE.

He's gone.

SKEET.

Who?

MOLLIE.

The lawyer. He jumped out of the window and has started for town.

SKEET.

(*Yells.*)

Then we've still got a chance. Hurray! (*Grabs AUNT J. by both hands.*) He's gone and Ted's home and I don't care what happens to us now. (*Swings AUNT J. rapidly around, shouting "Hurray!"*)

AUNT J.

Lemme alone, boy. Turn me loose! (*Down L. with SKEET.*)

MOLLIE rings dinner chimes. Music grows louder. Enter MAN and HENRIETTA from C. D. STONE and MISS L. from R.

MOLLIE.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me introduce the new heir. *Ted's come home!*

(AUNT J. and SKEET at L. HENRIETTA up L. C. MAN and MOLLIE in middle of stage. STONE down R. C. MISS L. in door R.)

QUICK CURTAIN.

For Second Curtain: MAN stands C. with MOLLIE, HENRIETTA, AUNT J. and Miss L. all around him, backs to audience, shaking hands, etc. Miss L. kisses him, SKEET laughs and points finger at the baffled STONE.

For Third Curtain: The seven characters stand bowing to the audience.

AND HOME CAME TED

THE SECOND ACT.

SCENE—*The same as for Act I, but it is now 7:40 p. m. Lighted candelabra on mantel. Lighted chandelier. Strong blue lights shine in from C. D. and window. Foots and borders on full at the beginning of the act.*

Discovered: SKEET seated back of desk up L. Noise and laughter heard from dining room at L. Music, “Farewell to Thee” (“Aloha Oe”), takes up the curtain, but ceases as soon as the conversation begins.

Enter MAN from L. He comes to L. C., facing SKEET.

SKEET.

How did it go, boss?

MAN.

Not very well. I was disappointed.

SKEET.

What d' y' mean disappointed?

MAN.

What became of the pretty girl in the green and white dress that I saw this afternoon? She wasn't at dinner.

SKEET.

That's Miss Garwood. She had her dinner in her room.

MAN.

Will she be down tonight?

SKEET.

I dunno. Sometimes she reads or writes or something.

MAN.

Then I guess I'll take a row on the lake.

SKEET.

Wait a minute. (Comes to him.) I'll see what I can do. (Goes to telephone behind screen.) Hello, Central! (Pause.) Gimme this same number with four rings. (Pause, then the bell rings four times.) Hello, is this Miss Garwood? (Pause.) This is Skeet at the office. (Pause.) Yes, I'm all right, thanks; how're you? (Pause.) Oh, I thought maybe something was the matter, 'cause you weren't down for dinner. (Pause.) Oh, say! Mr. Gilmore has arrived and he'd like to have you come down. He says he's lonesome. (Pause.) Naw, he ain't impertinent. Just lonesome, that's all. Goodbye.

MAN.

(As SKEET comes from behind screen.)

Now, you've done it.

SKEET.

Wasn't that right?

MAN.

Right? You've queered the whole business.

SKEET.

Naw, nothin' like it. She'll come down. They always do. You gotta hand these dames the rough stuff once in a while.

MAN.

She'll have a fine opinion of me.

SKEET.

Sure she will. She'll think you're a big gun and she'll come down and tell you so. Did the other one say anything to you?

MAN.

Yes, she kept telling me about the moon in Honolulu.

SKEET.

Naw, I don't mean her. I mean the old lady. The Aunt Samanthy with the red feather sky-scraper.

MAN.

The one with the dog?

SKEET.

That's her. She's a funny old dame, ain't she?

MAN.

What's her name?

SKEET.

Party by the name of Loganberry.

MAN.

She acted in a most peculiar manner. Made signs at me all through dinner.

SKEET.

She's forty-three and desperate.

MAN.

If she ever get's me alone, I'll be kidnapped.

SKEET.

She's been waiting fer you seven years. She said to tell you as soon as you arrived. She's anxious to talk to you.

MAN.

Skeet, if you ever see us together, you come right in and say that someone wants me on the phone. Get me?

Enter HENRIETTA from L.

HENRIETTA.

(Comes C. to MAN.)

Well, what do you think of the guests by this time?

MAN.

Some of them are perfectly charming.

HENRIETTA.

(*Smiling.*)

Flatterer.

MAN.

Have you been here long?

HENRIETTA.

Mercy, no. I just arrived. The doctor told me I must find a quiet place in the mountains for my nerves. I've had such horrible experiences during the past year that I feel like a perfect wreck. But I feel sure that I am going to like the Rip Van Winkle Inn. I'll be better here, far from the maddening crowd. I've had a disappointment, Mr. Gilmore. I need sympathy. My heart has been lacerated by the perfidy of man.

MAN.

Isn't that too bad?

HENRIETTA.

But in this charming spot I think I'll be able to forget all my troubles. That's the thing I like about this place. It's so quiet.

MAN.

Oh, yes, it's awfully quiet.

SKEET.

(*Down R.*)

I'll bet there's more quiet around here to the square mile than any other place in New York State.

HENRIETTA.

And I simply adore the mountains. They seem to carry me back to Honolulu. Do you ever have any balls or parties here, Mr. Skeet?

SKEET.

Well, it's pretty high up fer parties. All the balls are highballs.

HENRIETTA.

(Crosses to window.)

Oh, see the moon is coming out.

MAN.

(Up a little to her.)

So it is.

SKEET.

It does that once in a while.

HENRIETTA.

I wonder how the valley looks in the moonlight. (Romantically.) It must be gorgeous, bathed in white moonshine.

SKEET.

Not white moonshine, yellow! With foam on top.

HENRIETTA.

I think I'll go out. (To MAN.) Won't you show me the view again?

MAN.

Awfully sorry, but I can't get away just now. Important engagement.

HENRIETTA.

(Obviously disappointed.)

Oh, I wanted to tell you about my troubles.

SKEET.

(Aside to MAN.)

She thinks you're a policeman.

Enter STONE from L.

HENRIETTA.

(Goes to him.)

Oh, Mr. Stone, won't you show me the moon?

STONE.

(Down L.)

Show you what?

HENRIETTA.

The moon. I want to see it shining down in the valley. (*Long sigh.*) Oh, it's too romantic for words. And I left my ukulele on the veranda. (*Pause.*) Shall we look for it?

STONE.

I'll be delighted. (*Offers his arm, they start out C. D.*)

HENRIETTA.

It reminds me of the moon-kissed beach at Waikiki. Have you ever been in Honolulu, Mr. Stone? (*They stroll out C. D. to L.*)

MAN.

(Laughing.)

That seems to be her long suit—the moon in Honolulu. In ten minutes she'll be playing the ukulele and singing "Farewell to Thee!"

SKEET.

(Crosses to L.)

I think I'll go out and see if I can't start a little disturbance in the kitchen. I ain't had nothin' to eat since the last time. (*Exits L.*)

Enter Miss L. from R.

MISS L.

(Sees MAN up L., waves finger at him and speaks coquettishly.)

Ah, there you are!

MAN.

(Sees her, wilts, then imitates her tone.)
Yes, here I am.

MISS L.

I've been looking everywhere for you, Theodore.

MAN.

(Comes to her.)

And at last you have found me. What can I do for you?

MISS L.

(Comes close to him.)

Isn't this just like old times, Teddy?

MAN.

Well, really—

MISS L.

You haven't forgotten, have you?

MAN.

My memory is awfully bad at times. (Pauses.) And this is one of the times.

MISS L.

I can hardly realize that you are really here. Oh, Theodore, I've waited, and waited, and waited.

MAN.

You are quite a waiter, aren't you?

MISS L.

You remember the night of our parting, don't you?

MAN.

Can I ever forget it?

MISS L.

You act so strangely. I never knew you to be so distant.

MAN.

The poet says that distance lends enchantment to the view.

MISS L.

Why don't you call me by my old name?

MAN.

Your old name? I will. Anything to oblige, Miss Huckleberry.

MISS L.

Loganberry.

MAN.

Yes, I mean Loganberry.

MISS L.

But you haven't forgotten my first name, have you?

MAN.

Oh, that would be too familiar.

MISS L.

Or "Cutie." That's what you used to call me.
"Cutie."

MAN.

(*In agony to audience.*)

I wonder why Skeet doesn't come.

MISS L.

(*Overhearing.*)

Skeet? Are you waiting for him?

MAN.

Yes. He ought to be here this minute.

MISS L.

I'm afraid I'll have to leave you, Teddy. My little Gertrude isn't feeling at all well.

MAN.

That's too bad. I must get little Gertrude some candy or peanuts in the morning.

MISS L.

Oh, she doesn't care for anything like that. All she wants is a nice piece of raw fish.

MAN.

(*Astonished.*)

Raw fish?

Miss L.

Yes, I'm very careful about her diet.

MAN.

It sounds like it.

Miss L.

I gave her meat last winter and the hair all came out of her tail.

MAN.

(*Astounded.*)

Did it? That was rough on Gertrude.

Miss L.

I'll have to go to her now. She's acting so strangely. She wobbles when she walks.

MAN.

How unladylike.

Miss L.

But we must have one of our old time, cozy, comfortable chats real soon. Oh, Teddy, I have so much to tell you. I have never forgotten that night seven years ago. We were strolling in the moonlight.

MAN.

Were we?

Miss L.

Yes. Have you forgotten?

MAN.

I forgot the moon. I remember the rest of it perfectly but the moon slipped my memory.

Miss L.

And now you've returned to me, a successful business man.

MAN.

Not very successful.

Miss L.

Never mind, Teddy. Woman is like the ivy; the more you are ruined the closer she clings.

MAN.

Yes, and ivy is like the woman. The closer she clings the more you are ruined.

MISS L.

Someone is coming downstairs. We mustn't be seen together as yet.

MAN.

No, that's right. We mustn't.

MISS L.

We'll keep our little secret all to ourselves.

MAN.

Believe me, that's just what I want to do.

MISS L.

(At door L.)

And remember, I've never forgotten a word you said to me on that night. It's written in large capital letters forever on my heart. (Giggles, blows him a kiss and exits L.)

MAN.

Just keep it there. That's better than the cold storage.

Enter DIANA from R: in handsome dinner gown.

DIANA.

Well?

MAN.

(Turns toward her.)

I haven't been, but I feel a little better now.

DIANA.

(Recognizing him.)

You? I didn't know you were stopping at the Rip Van Winkle.

MAN.

Oh, yes. I'm here. I expect to be here for some time.

DIANA.

(Comes to him impulsively.)

Tell me, have you seen the hero of the tunnel?

MAN.

Yes, I saw him.

DIANA.

What was he doing?

MAN.

Well, the last time I saw him face to face he was
shaving.

DIANA.

And did you tell him what I told you?

MAN.

Yes.

DIANA.

Was he startled?

MAN.

I should say he was. He cut himself.

DIANA.

And what did he say?

MAN.

When he cut himself? *(Smiles and shakes head.)*
That's been cut out by the board of censorship.
(When this play is given by a school he might say,
*"That's been cut out by the faculty" with good
effect.)*

DIANA.

You know I don't mean that. *(Sits on settle, half
facing the audience.)* What did he say when you
gave him my message?

MAN.

It was the proudest moment of his life.

DIANA.

Really?

MAN.

You told me to tell him that you were proud to

belong to a country that breeds men like me—
(hastily) I mean like him. Isn't that enough to make any man proud?

DIANA.

Not a man like him. He's too noble. Now, tell me all about him. What is he like?

MAN.

(*Purposely misunderstanding.*)

What does he like? He likes you. (*Sits on the arm of the settle.*)

DIANA.

Did he say so?

MAN.

Oh, no. Certainly not. He isn't that kind of a man.

DIANA.

No, I'm sure he isn't.

MAN.

I meant that he likes girls like you. See? (*Slips over on settle beside her.*)

DIANA.

I suppose he knows lots of girls like me.

MAN.

No, I think I can safely say that he's never met one like you before.

DIANA.

What does he look like?

MAN.

A lobster.

DIANA.

What!

MAN.

I mean, I don't exactly know what he *does* look like. He looks like a man. That's it; just a plain, every day man.

DIANA.

(*Disappointed.*)

Oh, I thought he'd look like a hero.

MAN.

No, I don't think he does. How does a hero look?

DIANA.

Handsome and tall. He's tall, isn't he?

MAN.

Well, he's about as tall as I am.

DIANA.

And handsome?

MAN.

Yes. (*She looks at him.*) Oh, no! No, he isn't handsome. I was thinking about his brother.

DIANA.

I thought he would be much taller than you.

MAN.

Sometimes he looks taller. When he stands up.

DIANA.

When Skeet told me how he pulled him out of the tunnel I formed a picture of him in my mind.

MAN.

What kind of a picture? A comic valentine?

DIANA.

No, the picture of my ideal.

MAN.

I don't think he looks much like an ideal. In fact I wouldn't recognize an ideal if I saw one.

DIANA.

Wavy black hair brushed straight back, a winning smile and piercing black eyes. His eyes *are* black, aren't they?

MAN.

I don't think they are just now. They have been several times.

DIANA.

I pictured him as tall and muscular, yet very graceful.

MAN.

He's not so awfully graceful.

DIANA.

One of nature's nobleman with large broad—

MAN.

(*Interrupting.*)

Feet? He's got them all right.

DIANA.

(*Pouting.*)

I was going to say shoulders.

MAN.

Yes, he's got shoulders, too.

DIANA.

A low, commanding voice—

MAN.

(*Interrupting.*)

Low? (*In a deep voice.*) Like that?

DIANA.

And a face—

MAN.

Yes, he's got a face.

DIANA.

Clean cut and resolute.

MAN.

Two faced?

DIANA.

(*Rising.*)

You're making fun of me. I'm sure he'd never do anything like that. (*Pause.*) Would he?

MAN.

(*In a deep voice.*)

Oh, no; he's too noble.

DIANA.

You must think I am awfully bold.

MAN.

Oh, no. Why? DIANA.

Here I am talking to you like an old friend and we haven't even been introduced.

MAN.

I never thought of that.

DIANA.

I am Diana Garwood.

MAN.

I am (*pauses*) delighted.

DIANA.

Do you know, I think you have been trying to deceive me all the time. Now, haven't you?

MAN.

(*In a deep voice.*)

Oh, no. I'm too noble.

DIANA.

Then you are—you are the hero of the tunnel?

MAN.

Do I look like a hero?

DIANA.

Tell me the truth. MAN.

I haven't got a deep voice and piercing black hair brushed back, have I?

DIANA.

If you won't be serious (*starts to go up C.*).

MAN.

I am serious, and I only wish I had a deep, piercing voice.

DIANA.

You're not playing fair.

MAN.

Pardon me. You know they've been expecting the new president of the Furniture Factory to turn up all day. Well, I've turned up.

DIANA.

Then you are not— MAN.

The hero of the tunnel?

DIANA.

You are Mr. Gilmore.

MAN.

The new president of the factory. That's right. But my friends seem to call me Ted.

DIANA.

How silly you must think I am.

MAN.

Silly? I think you are the most sincere girl I have ever met.

DIANA.

(*Looks around.*)

I wonder where all the guests are.

MAN.

Some of them are out on the veranda looking at the moon.

DIANA.

It's turned out quite warm after all. It's rather hot in here, isn't it? I have a notion to look at the moon, too.

MAN.

There's a pretty walk clear down to the lake. I'll be glad to show you the way. (*Joins her.*)

DIANA.

And we can talk about the hero of the tunnel.

MAN.

And the moon.

DIANA.

It's just the same old moon, isn't it?

MAN.

Yes, but it never seemed as beautiful to me before.
(They stroll out C. D., going R.)

Enter AUNT J. from L.

AUNT J.

Dat boy Skeet sure am makin' a onslaught into de provisions in mah kitchen. I neber see sech a appetite in all mah born days. (Sees the lemonade on the counter.) Lawsy, lawsy, look at all de fancy lemonades somebody's done lef' out yere so careless. (Takes one and smells it.) Smells mighty fancy, mighty fancy! (Tastes it.) An' it tastes jes' as fancy as it smells. (Drinks it.)

Enter MOLLIE from R. in simple dinner dress.

MOLLIE.

(Watches AUNT J. drink the lemonade.)

Don't swallow the glass.

AUNT J.

Bless my soul, Miss Mollie, I was jes' tastin' one ob dese yere fancy Romany Rye lemonades dat somebody done lef'. Dey cert'n'y do taste mighty tasty, dey shore do.

MOLLIE.

Skeet made them for Mr. Ryker.

AUNT J.

Well, Mistah Ryker ai' gwine to git one ob 'em anyhow.

MOLLIE.

Where is Skeet?

AUNT J.

Out'n de dining room eatin'.

MOLLIE.

Tell him that I have put old Mr. Gilmore's dress suit out on his bed and I want him to put it on.

AUNT J.

You wants Mr. Skeet to put it on?

MOLLIE.

Certainly.

AUNT J.

Den I cert'n'y wants to hang 'round an' see de excitement. If dat boy ever puts on old boss's dress suit he's gwine to get lost in de creases.

MOLLIE.

And you can have that old white muslin you like so well.

AUNT J.

Can I? Lawsy, lawsy! I's gotta put some powdah on mah face den, 'kase I's most too highly complected to wear white. I'd look like a blackberry swimmin' 'round in a bucket ob milk.

MOLLIE.

Tell Skeet to hurry. Never mind, I'll tell him myself. (*Exits L.*)

AUNT J.

I'd better make haste and git dat white muslin dress 'fore she changes her mind. (*Crosses to door R.*) I'm gwine to cut it ober in de latest style with a harem-scarem skirt and a peek-a-boo waist and wear it to church next Sunday. I'll bet I'll be de belle ob de high-toned colored aristocracy. (*Minces out at R.*)

Pause. Then enter TED from C. D., coming from R.

TED.

(*Looks around, then speaks off up R.*)

It's all right. There isn't anyone here.

Enter ELSIE from C. D., coming from R.

ELSIE.

Oh, Ted, I'm so frightened.

TED.

There's nothing to be frightened about, honey. I'm here, and we're married now.

ELSIE.

I know, but papa has such a dreadful temper.

TED.

Don't worry about that. He can't do anything, even if he is a Senator. We're both of age and he can't annul the marriage.

ELSIE.

Couldn't he take me away from you and send me back to school?

TED.

I'd like to see him try it. You're my wife now, and all the world can't take you from me.

ELSIE.

I wonder what they're doing at school now, Ted.

TED.

We should worry. They won't miss you until tomorrow.

ELSIE.

Oh, it would be dreadful if papa would follow us here.

TED.

He'll never dream that we came up here. He'll think we're on our way to Cuba or some place. (*Looks around.*) I'd better find the clerk and register.

ELSIE.

Maybe the Inn hasn't opened yet. (*Goes to desk.*)

TED.

Oh, yes. It opened Monday.

ELSIE.

I hope there isn't anyone here I know. (*Reads register.*)

TED.

I don't suppose they have a very big crowd.

ELSIE.

Oh, Ted!

TED.

(*Rushes to her.*)

What's the matter?

ELSIE.

Look there. (*Points to name on register.*)

TED.

(*Reading.*)

"Diana Garwood, Watertown, N. Y." Why, she's from your town, isn't she? Do you know her?

ELSIE.

Know her? She's my cousin.

TED.

Your cousin?

ELSIE.

Oh, we must leave here at once. I wouldn't meet Diana for the world.

TED.

But we can't leave.

ELSIE.

Oh, Ted! She'll telephone to papa.

TED.

We'll have to keep her quiet, that's all. There isn't any other train tonight and we've run out of gasoline. Something is wrong with the carburetor and we've two flat tires.

ELSIE.

Let's go to another inn.

TED.

There isn't any other.

ELSIE.

But I can't meet Diana.

TED.

Maybe she won't see us. And even if she does, she can't do anything. We're married.

ELSIE.

I know it. But, Ted, I'm so miserable.

TED.

Miserable? On your honeymoon? Oh, Elsie! (*Reproachfully.*)

ELSIE.

I know I shouldn't be, but everything was so sudden today. Our running away and getting the license and the ring and then the ride to the minister's and the wedding. I've done nothing but hurry all day, and I didn't have any wedding dress or bridesmaids or wedding cake or anything, and I haven't had anything to eat since noon (*tearfully*), and my head aches and we're out of gasoline and have two flat tires, and now we've got to run right into my cousin Diana. Oh, I'll never elope again as long as I live.

TED.

I hope you won't.

ELSIE.

Forgive me, T-Ted, but I am so m-m-miserable. (*Sobs.*)

TED.

There, there, honey, everything's all right. I'll get you some supper and you won't have to meet your cousin Diana after all.

ELSIE.

I'm hungry, Ted. I want to go away. Diana will telephone to papa and he'll come and tear me away from you. (*Sobbing loudly.*) And I'm hungry! Even if I am a bride, I still have an appetite. I was too excited to eat any lunch. I want to go away. (*Loudly.*) I want to go away! (*Sobs.*)

TED.

All right. Gimme your grips. Put on your hat! We'll go.

ELSIE.

(*Sobbing.*)

But we can't go. Something is wrong with the what-do-you-call-it and there's two flat tires. And we haven't got any g-g-gas!

TED.

But we can't stay. We'll have to walk.

ELSIE.

I won't walk. I'm hungry, and my head aches, and I'm p-p-perfectly miserable. (*Sobs.*)

TED.

Maybe I can get you a sandwich somewhere.

ELSIE.

I don't want a sandwich somewhere. I want my supper.

TED.

Don't think of that, honey. You still have me.

ELSIE.

I know I have, but I c-c-can't eat you.

TED.

If your cousin finds us and telephones your father, good-night!

MOLLIE.

(*Outside at L.*)

Never mind, auntie, I'll fix it myself.

TED.

(Takes ELSIE's hand and rushes up to C. E.)

Quick, this way. HENRIETTA.

(Sings "Farewell to Thee" outside rear L.)

TED.

We can't go there. Someone is out there. (Rushes to C. E., going to R.)

ELsie.

There's Diana. (Points off rear R.)

TED.

Surrounded! Quick, the screen.

TED and ELSIE rush behind the screen as MOLLIE enters from L.

MOLLIE.

Is anybody there? (Pause.) I thought I heard someone.

Enter SKEET from R. in evening clothes, much too large, and wearing bright red bow tie.

SKEET.

(Struts proudly across stage from R. to L., then slowly revolves, trying to see his back.)

Pretty foxy, I guess. (MOLLIE laughs.) How do you like it?

MOLLIE.

Like what?

SKEET.

Me full dress. The get-up. The suit! S-double-o-t suit.

MOLLIE.

It's a scream.

SKEET.

Is it a good fit?

MOLLIE.

You couldn't have a better fit if you were in a hospital.

SKEET.

I'm crazy to get a look at meself.

MOLLIE.

If you ever get one look you will be crazy.

Enter AUNT J. from L. in white dress.

AUNT J.

(*Seeing SKEET at L. C.*)

Oh, lawsy, lawsy! (*Laughs loudly.*)

SKEET.

(*To AUNT J.*)

What's the matter, little one? What's the joke?

AUNT J.

De joke? I'm lookin' right at it. (*Laughs.*)

SKEET.

Don't you like the suit?

AUNT J.

Like it? (*Laughs.*) Lawsy, 'deed I does. I ain't seen nothin' so funny since de St. Patrick Day parade. Is dat what you call a full dress suit, Miss Mollie?

SKEET.

That's the trouble with it. (*Extends trousers.*) It's too full.

AUNT J.

It does look kinder loose.

MOLLIE.

(*At L.*)

It's all right, Skeet, only you'd better go upstairs and put on a black tie.

SKEET.

Black? I ain't goin' to a funeral.

MOLLIE.

You are if you don't change that tie and you'll be riding right up in the front hack.

SKEET.

I'm kinda partial to red myself.

AUNT J.

Boy, dat tie makes you look like you got de nose-bleed.

SKEET.

Well, if it ain't the proper thing I'll change it.

MOLLIE.

That's right. You'll find several black ties in old Mr. Gilmore's room.

SKEET.

All right, I got you. Miss Mollie, the folks want to know if they can dance in the dining-room?

MOLLIE.

Why, certainly. The phonograph is in there now.

AUNT J.

Is you gwineter dance, Mistah Skeet?

SKEET.

You'd better believe it. When it comes to the light fantastic I'm the pride of the Plumbers' Union.

AUNT J.

Where'd you learn how to dance?

SKEET.

In a correspondence school. (*Takes a few fancy steps.*) Look at that now. Fancy dancers ain't got nothin' on me.

MOLLIE.

You'd better hurry and change your tie. It's after nine.

SKEET.

In a minute. (*Runs out at R.*)

MOLLIE.

Jubilee, go out on the veranda and tell the folks to come in if they want to dance.

AUNT J.

Yas'm. When dat ole talkin' machine gits to playin' a jazz tune, I'm gwine to cut a few fancy steps mahself. (*Hums a syncopated air and dances a few steps.* ELSIE sneezes back of the screen.)

MOLLIE.

What was that? AUNT J.

Sounded like a sneeze.

MOLLIE.

It's the cat. Hurry up and call in the guests.

AUNT J.

Yas'm, I'm a gwine. (*At C. D.*) Dat's de first time I ever heard a cat with de influenzy. (*Exits C. D.*)

MOLLIE.

(*Pulling the screen aside.*)

Now you can come out.

ELsie.

Oh, Ted!

TED.

We were just waiting.

MOLLIE.

Quick; you haven't a minute to lose. Nobody must see you.

TED.

Why not?

MOLLIE.

Because there's another man here taking your place. We didn't think you'd get here. You'll have to hide until tomorrow. Then the meeting of the directors will take place and everything will be all right.

ELSIE.

Oh, Ted, what does it all mean?

MOLLIE.

Come here. (*Rushes Ted back of desk.*) Those stairs lead to the basement. Hurry down and don't let anyone see you. Why didn't you come on the afternoon train?

ELSIE.

How could we?

TED.

We were getting married this afternoon.

MOLLIE.

Getting married?

TED.

This is my wife.

ELSIE.

We were married at the Methodist parsonage at two o'clock.

MOLLIE.

No wonder you missed the train.

TED.

Can you get us something to eat?

MOLLIE.

Yes, yes. Only hurry downstairs before anyone sees you. I'll bring your supper down to you and no one will be any the wiser until tomorrow.

TED.

That's all right. We don't want her father to know anything about it tonight.

ELSIE.

But I'd rather not go down in the basement.

MOLLIE.

If you knew all the trouble Ted has caused already you wouldn't stand there arguing the question. Of course, if you want the guests to see you—

ELSIE.

No, no! TED.

Certainly not. ELSIE.

The guests mustn't see us.

TED.

For if they do they'll notify the Senator and that means trouble.

ELSIE.

Yes, papa is so impetuous.

TED.

We'll go down in the basement. Anything! Hurry, Elsie.

ELSIE.

But I'm starving. I haven't had anything to eat since lunch.

MOLLIE.

(At rear C.)

Quick, someone is coming! (TED descends.)

ELSIE.

Please bring us something to eat right away.

(ELSIE descends.)

MOLLIE.

If I have any more excitement tonight I don't think I can stand it.

Enter SKEET from R., wearing black bow tie.

SKEET.

(At R.)

Well, how do I look now?

MOLLIE.

(Comes to him.)

Oh, Skeet, what do you think's happened?

SKEET.

Give it up.

MOLLIE.

Ted's come home! SKEET.

Old stuff, old stuff! He came home before dinner. He's out on the lawn with Miss Diana. I got that down fine. You thought you'd catch me, didn't you?

MOLLIE.

No; I mean the real Ted.

SKEET.

Honest? Where is he?

MOLLIE.

I was nearly scared out of my senses. He's down in the basement.

SKEET.

Has anyone else seen him?

MOLLIE.

I don't think so. SKEET.

Then it's all right. Keep him down there until after the stockholders' meeting and keep cool. After he gets to be president of the Furniture Factory we'll be on Easy Street and can snap our fingers at this man Ira Stone. It's nice down in the basement.

MOLLIE.

I've got to get them something to eat.

SKEET.

Them? Is he twins?

MOLLIE.

Worse. He's married. That's why he didn't get in on the afternoon train.

SKEET.

Well, he's here anyhow and that makes his vote count at the meeting tomorrow. Couldn't you slip him up to Mr. Ryker's room and let him sign his name in the book?

MOLLIE.

Mr. Ryker has mysteriously disappeared. I can't understand what made him act that way. Aunt Jubilee said he jumped through the window like he'd been shot and away he went in Stone's car, and I haven't seen him since.

Enter AUNT J. from C. D.

AUNT J.

Come on in, folkses, de grand jubilee arenas am about to begin.

Enter STONE and HENRIETTA from C. D.

HENRIETTA.

(Coming down L.)

You dance, don't you, Mr. Stone?

STONE.

Well, I don't brag about it. But if you'll teach me, I'll be a good pupil.

HENRIETTA.

Oh, you must be a good dancer. You're so light on your feet.

SKEET.

(Behind desk to MOLLIE, who is near him.)
Just like a ton of coal.

MOLLIE.

(Up L.)

Start up the music, Jubilee.

AUNT J.

(At door L.)

Yas'm. I'm gwine to play a jazz band piece, 'kase ebry time I plays one of dem I jes' naturally can't make mah feet behave. (Hums and dances a few steps, then dances out L.)

ENTER MAN and DIANA from C. D.

MAN.

(Up C.)

Didn't I hear something about dancing?

MOLLIE.

Yes. In the dining room.

(Music off L.)

SKEET.

Come on, Miss Mollie; let's open the ball.

MOLLIE.

I can't. I've got a job in the kitchen. (Exits L.)

MAN.

It sounds good. Shall we try it?

DIANA.

I'd love to. (They dance out at L.)

HENRIETTA.

Aren't you going to ask me, Mr. Stone? I haven't
danced since I left Honolulu.

STONE.

I'll do my best. (They dance out at L.)

SKEET.

(Comes to C., looks at audience, pauses, sighs.)

All dressed up and no place to go. And there
ain't a dame in sight.

Enter Miss L. from R.

MISS L.

(Posing at R.)

I thought I heard some music.

SKEET.

(To audience.)

I knew it. Friday always was my Jonah day.

MISS L.

(*Mince*s to him.)

Are you dancing, Skeet?

SKEET.

Not yet. I don't believe I can do this one.

MISS L.

Oh, yes you can. It's only one, two, three; one, two, three. (*Dances in time to music.*) See?

SKEET.

(*Imitates awkwardly, but not to the point of burlesque.*)

I got y'. One, two, three; one, two, three!

MISS L.

And then around like this. (*Swings him.*)

SKEET.

Wait a minute! Don't do it so sudden like. You wanna give me notice when you do the merry-go-round. What is this here dance, anyhow?

MISS L.

It's the Banana Slide.

SKEET.

It's too slippery for me.

MISS L.

Oh, no. (*Illustrates.*) It's like this. Just a slip, a dip and a slide.

SKEET.

If I ever do that slip I'll slide all over the floor and dip right on my nose.

MISS L.

You're just bashful, that's all. What you need is a little confidence.

SKEET.

What I need is a little Romany Rye.

MISS L.

Oh, we're missing all that grand music. Come on, now! One, two, three!

SKEET.

One, two, three!

MISS L.

(*Grabs him.*)

Now a slip and a one, two, three!

SKEET.

(*Dancing.*)

Ain't that heavenly? I could just die doin' this dance. (*They dance off L.*)

TED ascends cautiously, looking around.

TED.

It's all right. She isn't here.

ELSIE ascends and comes down C. TED back of desk.

ELSIE.

I want an explanation and I want it at once. (*Tapping foot angrily.*)

TED.

Now, Elsie, be a good fellow. Brace up.

ELSIE.

I won't brace up. I want to know what that woman meant by calling you Ted.

TED.

Now, don't start that all over again. I tell you I don't know. I never saw her before.

ELSIE.

She evidently knows you.

TED.

I can't help that, can I?

ELSIE.

And why has she hidden us downstairs in the basement like a couple of thieves?

TED.

I told you all that before. She hid us down there because she didn't want your cousin to see us.

ELSIE.

She doesn't know I have a cousin.

TED.

Well, I give it up. Oh, darling, can't you be a little patient? I've got so much to worry me as it is.

ELSIE.

And so have I. I haven't had anything to eat since lunch. (*Sees lemonade on counter.*) Oh, Ted!

TED.

What is it?

ELSIE.

Look there.

TED.

The girl evidently brought the first course.

ELSIE.

(*Takes a lemonade and drinks it rapidly.*)
It tastes awfully funny.

TED.

I can't stand lemonade. I hope she is going to bring us something else.

ELSIE.

(*Takes another lemonade and starts to drink it.*)
I never tasted lemonade like this before.

Miss L. gives a sudden scream off L. TED ducks down behind the desk and ELSIE rushes back of the screen. Music stops. Pausc. ELSIE sneaks out and gets the lemonade and takes it behind the screen.

Enter from L. Miss L. followed by STONE and HENRIETTA.

MISS L.

(*Walking up and down agitatedly.*)

Oh, I never was so embarrassed in my life.

HENRIETTA.

You didn't hurt yourself, did you?

MISS L.

(*Limping around.*)

No, I don't think so. Only it was an awful jar.

Enter MAN and DIANA supporting SKEET, who limps in an exaggerated manner.

SKEET.

Oh, oh!

ALL.

Are you badly hurt?

SKEET:

I dunno but I think I cracked the floor.

STONE.

You are limping?

SKEET.

Yes, I know it. I think I broke (*pauses, feels ankle*).

OTHERS.

(*Bending toward him.*)

Yes, yes?

SKEET.

My ankle feels all right. But I know I broke something.

OTHERS.

You broke?

SKEET.

I broke my New Year's resolution.

MISS L.

I thought you said you could dawnce all the fawncy dawnces.

SKEET.

I thought I could, but that fawncy dawnce was too fawncy for me. I got the dip and the slide all right, but when I came to the slip, that was me knock-out! (*Limps to R.*)

MISS L.

Aren't you coming back and finish it?

SKEET.

Nope. It finished me. I'm going to bed. These here fawncy dawnces may be all right, but take it from me, I'd rather git mixed up in a football slugging match any day in the week. I see now why they call it the Banana dance. I got the slip all right, all right. Good-night! (*Exit R.*)

MISS L.

(*Goes to MAN at L.*)

Teddy, you're a lovely dancer. I'm sure you wouldn't let me fall.

MAN.

(*Hesitates.*)

I don't know. I might do worse than Skeet.

MISS L.

I'll run the risk. Tell Jubilee to play a slow dreamy waltz. (*Takes MAN.*) Now, one, two, three! (*They waltz.*) My, I could waltz to Paradise with you. (*Music heard off L.*)

MAN.

Let's reverse and go the other way. (*They waltz out at L.*)

STONE and HENRIETTA *stroll out at L.* DIANA *crosses and sits R.* ELSIE *reaches from screen to get the last glass of lemonade.* DIANA *sees her arm.*

DIANA.

(*Alarmed.*)

Oh! (*Starts to screen.*) What's that?

ELSIE.

Don't look, don't look! There isn't anyone here.

DIANA.

I will look. (*Removes the screen.*) Elsie!

ELSIE.

Diana!

DIANA.

What are you doing here?

ELSIE.

Drinking a glass of lemonade. (*Drinks calmly.*)

DIANA.

But—I don't understand. I thought you were in school. Elsie! What does this mean?

ELSIE.

Oh, Diana, I've done an awful thing!

DIANA.

Not expelled?

ELSIE.

Worse. I've eloped.

DIANA.

What!

ELSIE.

I was married at the Methodist parsonage at two o'clock this afternoon.

DIANA.

Married? To Lord Vaughan?

ELSIE.

Lord Vaughan! I should say not. You've never met my husband. He's from New York. I met him at boarding school.

DIANA.

But think of your father.

ELsie.

I won't! Every time I think of father I begin to get miserable. And I'm so h-h-happy. (*Cries.*)

DIANA.

Oh, Elsie, how could you?

ELsie.

You'd have done the same thing in my place. (*Brightens up.*) My husband is the most fascinating man I ever saw.

DIANA.

You should telegraph your father at once.

ELsie.

Oh, Diana, he'd be here in an hour or two and take me back to school. You know what an awful temper he's got. And if he ever catches Ted—

DIANA.

Ted?

ELsie.

My husband.

DIANA.

Is Ted your husband?

ELsie.

Yes. Do you know him?

DIANA.

I've seen him, but I never dreamed he was a married man.

ELsie.

He said he didn't know you. I asked him.

DIANA.

Your father must be notified at once. At once, do you hear? I never heard of anything so ridiculous.

ELSIE.

It isn't ridiculous, it's lovely. He wears the best-looking clothes—

DIANA.

(*Interrupting.*)

Elsie, be serious. ELSIE.

I am serious. But there's no use sending a telegram to papa. He can't do anything. It's too late—

DIANA.

He can! He can have him arrested for kidnapping or abduction or whatever you call it.

ELSIE.

(*Triumphantly.*)

He can't. I'm of age and my husband is of age and we're legally married with a ring and a minister and everything. And here's the marriage license. (*Takes it out.*)

DIANA.

What will Lord Vaughan say?

ELSIE.

The Lord only knows.

DIANA.

You were engaged to him?

ELSIE.

No, I wasn't, not really engaged. He only thought I was.

DIANA.

It had been announced in all the papers.

ELSIE.

I never could marry a man like that. He's over forty and he hasn't any front hair at all.

DIANA.

Oh, I don't know what to do.

ELSIE.

I'll tell you. Get me something to eat and three or four more of those funny lemonades.

Enter MOLLY from L. with lunch on tray.

MOLLIE.

Here's the lunch.

DIANA.

Mollie, what does this mean?

MOLLIE.

(To ELSIE.)

I thought I told you to stay down in the basement.

ELSIE.

I was too hungry. I came up to get my lunch.

MOLLIE.

Miss Diana, this is Ted's wife.

DIANA.

So she told me.

MOLLIE.

You know her?

DIANA.

She is my cousin.

MOLLIE.

(*Looks at empty glasses.*)

Good gracious!

ELSIE.

Wha's ma'r? (*meaning "what is the matter?"*)

MOLLIE.

Those Romany Ryes. Where are they?

ELSIE.

Have you lost someone.

MOLLIE.

The lemonades. They're gone.

ELSIE.

Of course they're gone. I drank them.

MOLLIE.

All of them?

ELsie.

Every drop. (MOLLIE throws up her hands in despair.) And I'm beginning to feel so funny. I heard someone dancing up here and I just love to dance. (Dances a little, then stops and giggles.) I feel so unnecessary, and I feel so funny.

MOLLIE.

Funny? You'll feel worse than that in a minute. (Takes her arm.) You come up to my room and go to bed.

ELsie.

Don't want to go to bed. Don't care if I never go to bed at all.

MOLLIE.

You must.

ELsie.

I won't.

DIANA.

Elsie!

ELsie.

Now don't be mean to me. Pleash remember that zish ish my wedding day.

MOLLIE.

Come to bed.

ELsie.

Not till I've had my supper. I haven't had anything to eat since noon.

MOLLIE.

Come with me. I'll bring your supper to you. (Leads her to R.)

ELsie.

I've got to say good-night to my husband.

MOLLIE.

I'll say it for you.

ELSIE.

Will you? Tha'sh awfully kind of you. You tell my husband good-night. I feel so funny and I'm getting sleepy. (*Yawns.*) Awfully sleepy.

MOLLIE.

Come along. Hurry! (*Hurries her out at R.*)

DIANA is seated down R. Enter MAN and Miss L. from L.

MISS L.

And now good-night, Teddy. I'll see you the first thing in the morning. MAN.

(*Mutters.*)

Not if I see you first.

MISS L.

What say?

MAN.

I said I had an awful thirst.

MISS L.

Good-night. I wouldn't go up so soon, but I'm afraid little Gertrude isn't well. She had a dreadful attack of indigestion just before dinner. (*At door R.*) Good-night, you silly, silly boy! (*Throws kiss at him, giggles and exits R.*)

MAN.

(*Comes down to DIANA.*)

What do you say to the next dance?

DIANA.

(*Rises, faces him scornfully.*)

No, thank you.

MAN.

What's the matter?

DIANA.

There's no use trying to deceive me any longer. I know all about it.

MAN.

You do?

DIANA.

Yes, I do. I trusted you. I never dreamed that you were not a gentleman.

MAN.

I always try to be.

DIANA.

Indeed? And what, pray, is your definition of a gentleman?

MAN.

Are you serious?

DIANA.

I was never more serious in my life.

MAN.

What have I done?

DIANA.

Have you acted the gentleman? Have you acted the man?

MAN.

I think I have.

DIANA.

You have queer ideas on that subject. What do you call a gentleman?

MAN.

Let me see. A gentleman is a man who takes his share of the world and lets other people take theirs, a man who is clean inside and outside, who neither looks up to the rich nor down on the poor, and who can win without bragging and lose without squealing, a man who is considerate to women, children and old people, who is too brave to lie, too honorable to deceive and too generous to cheat. That is a gentleman! (*Wait for applause.*)

DIANA.

Then you cannot class yourself in that category.

MAN.

Isn't that putting it a little strong?

DIANA.

Not half strong enough. You have deceived me, you have deceived Miss Loganberry, you have deceived everyone.

MAN.

I only did it to help Skeet and Miss Mollie.

DIANA.

And how about Elsie?

MAN.

Elsie? Elsie who?

DIANA.

My cousin, Elsie M'Corkle. You see I know everything.

MAN.

I don't know what you are talking about.

DIANA.

You do! She has confessed all. How can I break the news to her father?

MAN.

Who *is* her father?

DIANA.

You'll find out soon enough. He'll be here in the morning to introduce himself.

MAN.

Indeed?

DIANA.

And Elsie was engaged to Lord Vaughan.

MAN.

Well, why don't she?

DIANA.

Why don't she what?

MAN.

Marry him.

DIANA.

How can she when she married you this afternoon?

MAN.

I beg pardon?

DIANA.

Don't try to deceive me any longer. I've seen her and talked with her. She tried to shield you but I finally learned the whole truth. Your wife is waiting for you upstairs in Mollie's room.

MAN.

My wife!

DIANA.

Your wife.

MAN.

But there's some mistake. I haven't any wife.

DIANA.

Didn't you elope with Elsie this afternoon? Didn't you marry her at the Methodist parsonage at two o'clock?

MAN.

If I did, I didn't know it.

DIANA.

This is no time for cheap wit. I tell you I know everything. She has confessed.

MAN.

But it's a mistake. I didn't marry her, honest I didn't.

DIANA.

(*Horrified, recoiling from him.*)

You didn't marry her?

MAN.

(*Coming toward her.*)

Of course not.

DIANA.

Don't touch me, don't come near me, you—you beast!

MAN.

Beast?

DIANA.

Oh, you villain. You ran away with her and she thinks she is your wife. You coward! I'll telegraph her father at once.

MAN.

But—

DIANA.

Don't speak to me. Don't you dare to speak to me. Oh, if I were a man I'd horsewhip you.

Enter MOLLIE from R.

MAN.

Mollie can explain.

DIANA.

Mollie, I must drive over to the telegraph office at once. Is the car outside?

MOLLIE.

Yes, my car is, but it's so late. You'd better wait until tomorrow.

DIANA.

I won't wait. I'll not sleep a wink until I have exposed this man. (*Crosses to door C.*) He told me he wasn't married to Elsie at all. Oh, the disgrace, the disgrace! (*Exit C. D.*)

MAN.

What does she mean?

MOLLIE.

Ted eloped with her cousin this afternoon. They were married at two o'clock. That's why he missed the train.

MAN.

Then he's here?

MOLLIE.

I hid him in the basement. His wife is asleep in my room and everything is all right. You sign up

for him and he'll be elected president of the company tomorrow.

MAN.

And what will happen to me?

MOLLIE.

You can explain everything. Diana is a sensible girl. She'll listen to you in the morning.

MAN.

She'll listen to me tonight. (*Goes to C. D.*)

MOLLIE.

What are you going to do?

MAN.

I'm going to prove that I am a gentleman. That's all. (*Exit C. D.*)

TED appears behind the desk.

TED.

Did you get it? The supper, I mean.

MOLLIE.

(*Down R.*)

Yes.

TED.

Where's my wife? MOLLIE.

Her cousin discovered her. She's upstairs in my room.

TED.

I'll go up and see her.

MOLLIE.

You'll do nothing of the sort.

TED.

Why not?

MOLLIE.

Because the guests mustn't see you.

TED.

What do I care for the guests? I want my wife.

MOLLIE.

You can't have her. She's sound asleep.

TED.

And I want something to eat.

MOLLIE.

Go down in the basement and I'll bring it to you. After the stockholders' meeting tomorrow everything will be all right. You'll be the president then and can do what you please.

TED.

I don't know what you are talking about?

MOLLIE.

Neither do I, so you haven't got anything on me. Listen! Someone is coming. Quick, down in the basement.

TED.

It isn't the Senator, is it?

MOLLIE.

Who's the Senator?

TED.

He's Elsie's father and his temper is worse than a wounded lion's.

MOLLIE.

Then hurry down in the basement.

(Pushes him to counter.)

TED.

But I don't want to.

MOLLIE.

Do you want him to see you?

TED.

Who?

MOLLIE.

The Senator.

TED.

Great day, no! Is he here? Then hide me in the

basement or in the attic or under the kitchen sink—anywhere.

MOLLIE.

Quick, they're coming. (TED descends.)

Enter STONE and HENRIETTA from L.

HENRIETTA.

(Coming down stage C., not seeing MOLLIE, who is up L.)

It must be frightfully late.

STONE.

(Close to HENRIETTA.)

I never knew an evening to pass so quickly.

HENRIETTA.

You do say the sweetest things! Do you know, Mr. Stone, I never met a man before who impressed me so favorably on short acquaintance.

STONE.

(Bows and kisses her hand.)

And I never met a more charming lady.

MOLLIE.

Oh, mumma, pass the mush!

HENRIETTA.

Oh, Miss Mollie, I didn't know you were there. I want to speak to you. I have some jewels and a precious little box in my satchel upstairs. Do you think they'll be safe? It's some shares of stock in the Furniture Company.

STONE.

In our Furniture Company, Miss Darby.

HENRIETTA.

Yes. I'm going to sell them at the meeting tomorrow.

STONE.

Good! Will you give me the first chance to bid on them? I'll pay more than anyone else.

HENRIETTA.

We'll talk it over in the morning. Will my satchel be safe upstairs, Mollie?

MOLLIE.

(*Down C.*)

The house is only responsible for articles left in the safe.

HENRIETTA.

Oh, have you a safe? I'm so glad. My little keepsakes mean a whole lot to me. I'll bring them down. (*Exit R.*)

MOLLIE.

(*Crosses to door L. and calls.*)

Jubilee!

AUNT J. *appears at door L.*

Ma'am?

AUNT J.

MOLLIE.

I wish you'd prepare a little lunch for me. Three or four sandwiches, a couple of pieces of pie and a glass of milk. I'll have to sit up late.

AUNT J.

Yas'm. (*Exits at L.*)

STONE.

(*Up C.*)

So you expect to sit up late, do you, Mollie?

MOLLIE.

(*Down L.*)

Yes.

STONE.

(*Coming down C.*)

Poor girl! You still think you can hoodwink me, do you?

MOLLIE.

(*At L. C.*)

What d' y' mean hoodwink?

STONE.

(*Close to her, speaks savagely.*)

I mean that unless your precious Ted has an interview with Ryker tonight and signs the book that I will be elected president of the company tomorrow.

MOLLIE.

Mr. Ted's got the controlling interest, hasn't he? He's got fifty shares of stock, hasn't he? And he's here now, isn't he?

STONE.

Oh, yes, he's here all right, but he's got to sign Ryker's book and Ryker seems to have disappeared.

MOLLIE.

Oh, no, he hasn't.

STONE.

Then where is he?

MOLLIE.

He's upstairs.

STONE.

He's not upstairs and you know it. He wasn't here at dinner and he isn't anywhere about the place. I've made a complete investigation, Mollie. And so after all your pains you've lost the game and I take the trick.

MOLLIE.

Oh, go away and leave me alone. Aren't you satisfied with the misery you have caused me already? What have I ever done to you? Why are you hounding me this way?

STONE.

I don't wish to hound you, Mollie. All I want is the control of the Furniture Company, and believe me I'm going to have it!

MOLLIE.

(*With great energy.*)

You are not! If I have to go to the village and drag Jim Ryker back here by the hair of his head. My fighting blood is up, Ira Stone, and I defy you!

Enter DIANA from C. D.

DIANA.

Mollie, what's the matter?

MOLLIE.

Nothing, Miss Diana. I'm only a little upset, that's all. Did you send your telegram?

DIANA.

Yes. The Senator will be here the first thing in the morning. I'll go up and look after Elsie. Good-night, Mollie. (*Exit R.*)

STONE.

Elsie? Who's Elsie?

MOLLIE.

One of the guests. If you want to go to your room, Mr. Stone, don't let me detain you.

STONE.

I'll go to my room when I get good and ready.

Enter JIM RYKER from C. D., disguised as an old man, long tan coat, old-fashioned plug hat, white wig and chin whiskers, large spectacles. He walks with a cane, is bent over and disguises his voice.
Note: The audience must not recognize him as JIM.

JIM.

Evening, folks!

MOLLIE.

(*Goes behind desk.*)

Good evening, sir.

JIM.

This is the Rip Van Winkle Inn, ain't it?

MOLLIE.

Yes, sir.

JIM.

Then I want to get a room fer the night.

Enter MAN from C. D. He stands at rear.

MOLLIE.

All right.

JIM.

I started to drive down to town tonight, but my old bay mare Susannah balked on me and I don't 'low I'll do much travelin' till mornin'. Got a good room, have ye?

MOLLIE.

Yes, sir. (*Takes a key from the rack.*) I'll show you up.

JIM.

(*With hand back of ear.*)

Hey? (*Pronounced "hay."*)

MOLLIE.

(*Down C. to him.*)

I'll show you your room.

JIM.

Yep. I want a room. Of course. What d' y' think I wanted, a stall?

MOLLIE.

(*At R. C.*)

Right up the stairs.

JIM.

Hey?

MOLLIE.

(*Loudly.*)

I said right up the stairs.

JIM.

Pairs? What fur?

MAN.

(Comes down between Jim and Mollie.)
Give me the key, Mollie. I'll take him up. (Leads Jim to R.)

JIM.

Did ye unhitch Susannah?

MAN.

Yes, I put her in the stable.

JIM.

Hey?

MAN.

No, I didn't give her any hay tonight. I'll feed her in the morning. Come on.

JIM.

(Places plug hat on the desk.)
Ain't I got to register?

MOLLIE.

(Pushes register to him.)

Right there.

JIM.

Where'll I write? (Puts on spectacles.)

MOLLIE.

(Loudly.)

Right there.

JIM.

Here? (Points to line.)

MOLLIE.

Yes!

JIM.

On this line?

MOLLIE.

(Loudly.)

Yes!

JIM.

Above it er below it?

MAN.

(Beside him.)

Sign your name right there. (Points.)

JIM.

My full name?

MAN.

(Yells.)

Yes!

JIM.

(Takes pen slowly, looks at it, pauses, then lays it down.)

I can't write.

MAN.

Never mind, it'll cost you five dollars just the same.

JIM.

Hey?

MAN.

Five dollars! (Yells.) Five!

JIM.

Alive? Of course I'm alive. Did y' think I was dead?

MAN.

I said five! (Counts on his fingers.) One, two, three, four, five!

JIM.

(To MOLLIE, who is at his L.)

What's he tryin' to do? Talk deaf and dumb to me? I can't talk thataway. (Shakes his head at MAN, who pantomimes for him to follow him upstairs.) Excuse me, mister, I didn't know you was deaf and dumb. It must be awful to be afflicted like that.

JIM and MAN are down stage at R. MOLLIE up L. C. STONE down L. Enter HENRIETTA from R. carrying jewel box.

HENRIETTA.

(Goes to MOLLIE.)

There it is, Miss Mollie. Are you sure it will be safe?

MOLLIE.

Of course. (MOLLIE and HENRIETTA go to safe.)

TED appears back of desk, unobserved, watching them.

HENRIETTA.

That little box contains my stock in the Furniture Company. Some day, maybe tomorrow, it will be worth a lot of money.

MOLLIE.

I'll put it right here in the corner. (Puts box in safe, closing safe door, but not locking it.)

JIM.

Wall, I reckon I'll go to bed. (TED disappears.)

MAN.

Right this way. (Leads him to door R.)

JIM.

Hey?

MAN.

Straw! (Jerks him out at R.)

HENRIETTA.

(Crossing to R.)

Good-night, Mr. Stone. Until tomorrow.

STONE.

Pleasant dreams.

HENRIETTA.

Good-night, Mollie.

MOLLIE.

(Up C.)

Good-night.

HENRIETTA.

I've had such a pleasant evening. (Exit R.)

Enter AUNT J. from L. with lunch on tray.

AUNT J.

Here's de lunch, Miss Mollie.

MOLLIE.

Put it on the desk, Jubilee, and then lock up.

AUNT J.

Yas'm. (*Puts lunch on desk, draws shades, locks C. D.*)

STONE.

I really feel sorry for you, Mollie. You're a plucky little Irishman and you've put up a good fight, but this time I happen to hold the winning cards. (*At door R.*) Old Man Gilmore treated me like a dog and put me out of the factory, but tomorrow when the votes are counted you'll find I have the control. Then I'll run things to suit myself. (*Laughs.*) Too bad Mollie, that your friend Ted can't sign Mr. Ryker's book tonight, isn't it? But I rather think I'm the winner now. Whenever I make up my mind to get a thing, I generally get it. (*Laughs and exits R.*)

MOLLIE.

I wish you'd make up your mind to get the small-pox. (*Sits down L.*)

AUNT J.

(*Gets candle from behind desk and brings it to MOLLIE.*)

Everything's locked up now, Miss Mollie. Yere's your candle. Is you goin' to bed?

MOLLIE.

(*Rises slowly.*)

Yes, Jubilee, I think I will. (*Lights candle.*)

AUNT J.

Dis shore has been a strenuous day, Miss Mollie.

MOLLIE.

Indeed it has. Put out the lights.

AUNT J.

Yas'm. (*Turns out all the lights on the stage.*
Note: Every light in the house must be out, nothing illuminating the scene but MOLLIE's candle.) Good-night, Miss Mollie. (*Exits L.*)

MOLLIE.

I'll just leave the lunch on the counter and Ted can get it when he wants it. Well, I guess I'll go to bed. (*Yawns.*) This has certainly been a strenuous day for Mollie. Mr. Ryker is sure to be back in the morning and then I'll tell him everything. Maybe Ted can sign the book and get control of his grandfather's factory after all. (*Yawns.*) My, but I'm sleepy. (*Goes to R.*) Skeet seems just as anxious to put one over on Stone as I am myself. (*Pause.*) Or maybe it's me he's interested in. I wonder if he is. He's a nice boy, an awfully nice boy, and his heart is as big as all outdoors. (*Yawns.*) Well, there's plenty of work to be done tomorrow, but he'll help me. I can always depend on Skeet, and he and I can outwit a dozen such men as Ira Stone. Skeet and I! (*Pause.*) I wonder if he likes me.

(*Sudden noise heard at window.*)

(*Whispers.*) What's that? (*Blows out the candle, the stage is in total darkness.*)

(*JIM opens the window at rear. "Creepy" music.*) There's someone trying to get in at the window. And it's broken. (*Listens.*)

(*JIM appears at window with electric flashlight.*) Oh! (*MOLLIE hides behind chair at R.*)

JIM climbs in at window. He wears a long black coat and black slouch hat. A dark handkerchief conceals the lower part of his face. Note: The audience must not recognize the intruder, so be careful not to allow the flashlight to shine on him. He flashes light around stage, but does not see MOLLIE. He goes to safe and kneels at it. MOLLIE creeps up C. until she is immediately behind him. Take plenty of time for this action. Suddenly MOLLIE throws both arms around Jim's neck, forcing him backward to the floor. She screams loudly. They struggle on the floor, Jim with the jewel box. MOLLIE screams again. Jim pushes her to floor, rushes to window, jumps through and makes his exit.

AUNT J. enters with lighted lamp. Stage lights up a little.

AUNT J.

(At L., screaming.)

Help, fire, murder, police, burglums, burglums, burglums!

MOLLIE.

(Rises quickly.)

Where did he go?

AUNT J.

Right through the window.

Music changes from mysterious to "hurry." Enter SKEET from R. dressed in slippers and pajamas, his hair rumpled.

SKEET.

What is it?

MOLLIE.

Quick, quick, through the window!

(SKEET grabs the plug hat from the desk, dons it,

rushes to window and jumps through, AUNT J. and MOLLIE watching him breathlessly.)

CURTAIN.

Second Picture: AUNT J. and MOLLIE looking out of window.

Third Picture: AUNT J., MOLLIE and SKEET bowing to audience. Note: No other characters appear at this time, as the audience must not be allowed to suspect the identity of the robber.

CURTAIN.

AND HOME CAME TED

THE THIRD ACT.

SCENE—*The same as for Acts I and II, but it is now 9:30 a. m., the next morning. The room is in order, the safe is closed. Strong yellow light through C. D. and window.*

Discovered: AUNT J. sweeping and singing.

AUNT J.

(Singing to a "made-up" tune.)

Old Mistah Skeeter got bit by a bee,
He turned around and bited a flea,
Flea bit a gnat, gnat bit a jigger,
Den de whole menagerie done bit a nigger.

(TED raps on floor behind desk with a stick.)

AUNT J.

(Alarmed.)

What's dat? *(TED raps again.)* It's down in de basement. *(In frightened whisper.)* It's spooks! Oh, lawsy, lawsy, burglums las' night and spooks dis mawnin'. It's sure time for dis yere 'spectable colored lady to git herself another situation. *(TED gives three distinct knocks on floor.)* Um! Um! Jes' listen at dat. *(Backing toward L., her eyes on counter.)* I'm sure gwine to go while de goin' is good.

Enter MOLLIE from L. AUNT J. bumps into her and screams loudly.

MOLLIE.

What's the matter, Jubilee? What is it?

AUNT J.

'Deed an' I dunno what it is. Spooks er burglums er sumpin'. Miss Mollie, I likes you and I likes de

place, but I cert'n'y ain't got no love for excitement, and burglums is bad enough, Lawd knows, but now yere comes some spooks a pestigat'm 'round.

MOLLIE.

What are you talking about?

AUNT J.

De spooks.

MOLLIE.

What spooks?

AUNT J.

Dat's what I dunno. I was jes' a sweepin' 'round yere ca'm and peaceful like, when all ob a sudden I yeerd it. Yas'm, I yeerd wif mah own ears.

MOLLIE.

Heard what?

AUNT J.

I dunno what. It jes' went boom-boom, dataway down in de basement.

MOLLIE.

Oh, you heard a noise in the basement?

AUNT J.

Yas'm, only it was worse 'n a noise. Sounded like ole Brother Gabriel blowin' his big horn trumpet for de Judgment Day.

MOLLIE.

Did you look and see what it was?

AUNT J.

Who, me? No, ma'am! No, ma'am! When I yeers a noise like dat all mah curiosity jes' naturally oozes out ob me.

MOLLIE.

There isn't any spook in the basement, Jubilee. It must have been your imagination.

AUNT J.

Imagination? No'm, it hain't dat, 'kase your imagination don't go rappin' and bangin' round boom-

boom. When mah imagination gits to actin' dataway I'm cert'n'y gwine to see a doctor.

MOLLIE.

You go into the dining room and finish waiting on the table and I'll see what's in the basement.

AUNT J.

Lawsy, Miss Mollie, don't you go down there. 'Kase dey ain't no tellin' what's gwine to happen if you does.

MOLLIE.

Never mind, Jubilee. You go into the dining room.

AUNT J.

(Crosses to L.)

Yas'm, I'm gwine, but harken to mah words, Miss Mollie, and don't you have no trouble wif dat boom-boom down in de basement. We's all liable to wake up yere some mawnin' and find ebry las' one ob us murdered plum dead wif our throats cut off. Yas'm, and den what's we gwine to do? (Exit L. muttering.)

MOLLIE.

(Goes behind desk and raises trap.)

Come up. There's no one here.

TED ascends.

TED.

Where's my wife?

MOLLIE.

Upstairs. She's all right. You needn't worry about her.

TED.

(Starts to R.)

I'm going to see her.

MOLLIE.

(Pulls him back.)

You're going to stay right down there in the basement until Ira Stone leaves this house.

TED.

I won't. I'm going to my wife. I don't care who sees me. I don't give a hang for the Senator. Nothing can separate us now. We're married.

MOLLIE.

The police are looking for you.

TED.

Police?

MOLLIE.

Yes, the police. You'd better give up that jewel case.

TED.

I don't know what you're talking about.

MOLLIE.

Oh, yes you do. Miss Darby's jewel case was stolen last night. It contained her shares of stock in the Furniture Company. Didn't you take it?

TED.

Of course not. What do I want with shares in a Furniture Company. All I want is my wife and to get back to Washington.

MOLLIE.

Washington? Aren't you going to stay here and manage the company?

TED.

I most certainly am not. I'm not going to manage anything.

MOLLIE.

There was an awful scene last night. Diana Garwood has telegraphed to Elsie's father.

TED.

Is he here?

MOLLIE.

He'll be here this morning.

TED.

That settles it. I'm going to Washington.

MOLLIE.

He'll be here in ten minutes.

TED.

Then in ten minutes I'll be gone.

MOLLIE.

Nonsense! You'd better go back in the basement and keep cool until he leaves.

TED.

But I want—

MOLLIE.

Never mind what you want.

TED.

(Yells.)

I want my wife.

MOLLIE.

I'll send her down.

TED.

And I want my breakfast.

MOLLIE.

It's on the way. Hurry, someone is coming?

TED.

Please get me something to eat. (He descends.)

Enter STONE from L. He wears auto cap, gloves and goggles.

STONE.

Well, Mollie!

MOLLIE.

No, I'm sick a-bed.

STONE.

(At L. C.)

Still got a grouch on, have you? Well, I don't blame you.

Enter SKEET from L.

MOLLIE.

Are you getting ready to give up your room?

STONE.

For the present, yes. Your little plan didn't work very well, did it? The young man arrived on time all right, but unfortunately the attorney didn't show up and the register hasn't been signed. That lets your friend Ted out. He won't be allowed to vote. Too bad, and I can run things as I please with my forty votes. Pretty soft for me, isn't it? I'm going down to the village and learn what became of Mr. Ryker, the attorney. (*Exit C. D.*)

SKEET.

Gee, it 'ud be a lucky thing fer us if somebody 'ud touch a match to his gasoline tank. (*Goes back of desk.*)

Enter DIANA and Miss L. from L.

MISS L.

(*Chattering excitedly.*)

A robbery right here in the hotel! I simply can't get over it. And me with nearly sixty dollars and my grandfather's gold watch under my pillow.

DIANA.

(*Goes to MOLLIE at R.*)

Have you heard anything more about the burglar, Mollie?

MOLLIE.

No. The police from the village have been here, but they know as much about catching a burglar as the Ladies' Aid Society of the Congregational Church.

DIANA.

How is Elsie this morning?

MOLLIE.

Still sound asleep.

MISS L.

(Coming to C.)

Elsie? Who is Elsie?

DIANA.

My cousin. Mr. Gilmore's bride.

MISS L.

(Very much excited.)

Mr. Gilmore? Not Ted? (Grasps DIANA's arm.)
Ted Gilmore isn't married, is he?

MOLLIE.

(Positively.)

Yes, he is. At two o'clock yesterday afternoon at the Methodist parsonage.

MISS L.

(Totters toward chair.)

Oh, I'm faint. (Sinks in chair.) Water, water!
(Faints.)

SKEET rushes off L. DIANA and MOLLIE fan MISS L. SKEET enters with glass of water. MOLLIE sprinkles Miss L's face.

MOLLIE.

There!

MISS L.

(Opening her eyes.)

Where am I?

MOLLIE.

Just where you have been for the past forty years.
Single and unattached.

MISS L.

Oh, the perfidy of man! (Rises.) I never want to look upon his deceitful face again. (Crosses to R. in towering rage.) Married, is he? Oh! And I let him call me Cutie.

MOLLIE.

Where are you going?

MISS L.

I am going to pack my things and leave at once. Do you think that I'd remain under the same roof with such a man? Married! Oh, and I even intended to give up little Gertrude for his sake. (Exits R. banging door after her.)

SKEET.

(At rear with MOLLIE.)

Gee, I hope nobody ever acts that way about me.

MOLLIE.

Don't worry. They won't.

Enter MAN from L. He goes to DIANA at R. C.

MAN.

Diana!

DIANA.

Don't you dare to speak to me! I've just seen another instance of your perfidy.

MAN.

But you don't understand.

DIANA.

I understand entirely too much. Your wife is upstairs and her father will be here in ten minutes.

MAN.

But listen to me. I can explain everything.

DIANA.

You can explain to Elsie and you can explain to her father. (*Crosses to R.*) Perhaps you can explain to poor Miss Loganberry, who's been faithful to you for seven years, but you can not explain to me. (*Exits R.*)

MOLLIE.

(*Comes down C. to MAN.*)

Don't worry, sir. You'd better go and talk to her. Tell her the truth. There's no use trying to deceive them any longer. We might just as well pack up our things and leave at once.

MAN.

Leave? Why?

MOLLIE.

Because Mr. Ryker isn't here and Ted hasn't signed the book.

MAN.

Oh, don't worry about a little thing like that. I signed the book last night.

MOLLIE.

You did?

SKEET.

But that's forgery or something, in the first degree.

MOLLIE.

Wasn't it dangerous?

MAN.

What do we care for a little danger? Mr. Ryker

is ready to come back to the Inn just as soon as you get rid of the lady from Honolulu.

MOLLIE.

Miss Darby? Why?

MAN.

He said he wouldn't appear until she left.

MOLLIE.

That settles Miss Darby. She'll have to go at once. Where is she, Skeet?

SKEET.

In the dining room.

MOLLIE.

Tell her I want to see her.

SKEET.

Sure. (*Exits L.*)

MAN.

I think I'll go out on the tennis court and work off a little surplus energy. (*Goes to C. D.*)

MOLLIE.

You'd better see Miss Garwood and tell her everything.

MAN.

I'll see her at lunch. (*Exit C. D.*)

Enter HENRIETTA from L. MOLLIE comes down to R. C.

HENRIETTA.

Have you heard anything of my missing bonds, Mollie?

MOLLIE.

Not a word.

HENRIETTA.

Let me see! Where were you standing when you heard the noise at the window last night?

MOLLIE.

(*Assumes same position as at end of the second act.*)

Right here. I was just going to bed.

HENRIETTA.

Were the doors locked?

MOLLIE.

Yes. Aunt Jubilee locked them and put out the lights. Then she went out there. (*Points to door L.*) And I was over here.

HENRIETTA.

In the dark?

MOLLIE.

No, I had a lighted candle. All of a sudden I heard a noise at the window and I blew the candle out. Then I crouched down here and a man opened the window and got in.

HENRIETTA.

I see. That's how you knew it was a man?

MOLLIE.

It felt like a man.

HENRIETTA.

Could you see him?

MOLLIE.

Not very plain. He had a flashlight, but he didn't see me. He went over there to the safe and knelt down. I slipped up behind him and grabbed him around the neck.

HENRIETTA.

That's how you knew it was a man?

MOLLIE.

Yes. I pulled him back on the floor. Just there. And then I screamed.

HENRIETTA.

Did he have my jewel box then?

MOLLIE.

Yes. Aunt Jubilee came running in with a lighted lamp. He jerked away from me and jumped out of the window.

HENRIETTA.

You didn't find any clews, did you?

MOLLIE.

Not a thing. We looked everywhere, on the floor and on the desk and all over the room.

HENRIETTA.

Where was Skeet?

MOLLIE.

He came in just after the man jumped out of the window. He grabbed a hat from the desk and jumped out after him.

HENRIETTA.

Did he see anything?

MOLLIE.

No, the man had completely disappeared.

HENRIETTA.

And my stock in the Furniture Company with him. You didn't miss anything else, did you?

MOLLIE.

Not a thing. There wasn't anything else in the safe, except some old books and papers and he didn't touch them.

HENRIETTA.

Where was Mr. Stone?

MOLLIE.

Upstairs, I guess.

HENRIETTA.

Well, he's the party I suspect.

MOLLIE.

He wouldn't have the nerve to get mixed up in a safe robbery. Ira Stone is mean enough to do most things, but when it comes to real dirty work he always hires a crook.

HENRIETTA.

You know how anxious he was to buy my shares last night.

MOLLIE.

Where did you get those shares, Miss Darby?

HENRIETTA.

They belonged to my late husband.

MOLLIE.

Oh, then you're a widow.

HENRIETTA.

I was a widow. Just now I'm a wife. You see I married again.

MOLLIE.

Oh!

HENRIETTA.

Last year I met a rich young lawyer from the States and we were married.

MOLLIE.

That's good.

HENRIETTA.

But it didn't turn out very well.

MOLLIE.

That's bad.

HENRIETTA.

My first husband was fickle, very, very fickle.

MOLLIE.

Did you ever catch him flirting?

HENRIETTA.

(Laughs.)

Catch him flirting? Sure. That's how I caught him.

MOLLIE.

That's bad.

HENRIETTA.

He was a man of some wealth.

MOLLIE.

That's good.

HENRIETTA.

But we were married only a short time when he was drowned.

MOLLIE.

That's bad.

HENRIETTA.

But after three or four months I met another young man. We fell in love at first sight.

MOLLIE.

That's good.

HENRIETTA.

And I married him. But this one is not a very wealthy man.

MOLLIE.

That's bad.

HENRIETTA.

So I came over here to the States to see if I could realize anything on the stock in the Furniture Company. And now it has been stolen. Oh, I don't know what to do.

MOLLIE.

You might go down to the village and put it in the hands of the detectives.

HENRIETTA.

But you said they were no good.

MOLLIE.

Why not telegraph to the city for a secret service man?

HENRIETTA.

That's a good idea.

MOLLIE.

Or go down to New York for the day and bring a detective back with you tomorrow.

HENRIETTA.

Yes, I might do that.

MOLLIE.

I'll see if the car is ready. If it is you can leave at once. (*Exits C. D.*)

AUNT J. *appears at door L.*

HENRIETTA.

She seems awfully anxious to have me leave. I can't understand it at all. She acts very suspicious.

AUNT J.

You don't think Miss Mollie stole your papers, do you?

HENRIETTA.

No, of course not.

AUNT J.

'Kase she didn't. I saw her on the floor and the burglum a-climbin' out'n dat winder.

HENRIETTA.

What did he look like, Auntie?

AUNT J.

Lawsy, 'deed an' I dunno. I jes' seed him run, dat's all. I dunno what he looked like 'kase jes' about dat time I frowed mah apron over mah head and went into de high-sterics. And I'm shore gwine to git me another situation. After what I seed las' night and what I yeerd dis mawnin', dis yere place am gittin' too spookatorious for me.

HENRIETTA.

This morning? What did you hear this morning?

AUNT J.

Ghostesses, dat's what I yeerd. Down in de basement under dat desk. Dey groan, aaah! jes' dat-away, and den dey go boom-boom, poundin' on d' trap-door, boom-boom! jes' dataway.

HENRIETTA.

Did you hear that this morning?

AUNT J.

Yas'm. Boom-boom! jes' dataway.

HENRIETTA.

Then someone is concealed in the basement.

AUNT J.

Dat's what I's tryin' to 'tell Miss Mollie, but she 'low dat I's mistaken.

HENRIETTA.

I understand it all! Whoever stole my stock is hid in the basement.

AUNT J.

Stole your which? Is dey done stole your stockings, too?

HENRIETTA.

No, no. My stock in the Furniture Company. Mollie has been bribed and has hidden them in the basement. That's why she is trying to get rid of me. The burglar is in the basement.

AUNT J.

Lawsy, lawsy! Is he? And all mah blackberry jam and watermillion pre-serves down there!

Enter MOLLIE from L.

MOLLIE.

(To HENRIETTA.)

Are you ready?

HENRIETTA.

Ready?

MOLLIE.

To go to the village. The car is out in front waiting for you.

Enter SKEET from C. D.

SKEET.

Do you want me to drive her down, Miss Mollie?

HENRIETTA.

(*At R.*)

No, it won't be necessary. I've decided to stay here. I think I have a better chance of recovering my stolen property here at the hotel than anywhere else.

MOLLIE.

But I've rented your room.

HENRIETTA.

Rented it?

MOLLIE.

You gave it up, you know. I've put Mrs. Gilmore in there.

HENRIETTA.

Can't I have another room?

MOLLIE.

I'm sorry, but everything is taken.

HENRIETTA.

It looks as if you were trying to get rid of me.

MOLLIE.

(*Nervously.*)

Not at all. I only want to help you recover your property.

HENRIETTA.

That's just what I'm going to do, and I'm going to stay right here.

MOLLIE.

But there isn't any room for you. Now listen, Miss Darby, and I'll tell you the truth. I didn't want to alarm you, but one of the guests is sick and I'm afraid it is something contagious. You had better go to the village at once.

HENRIETTA.
(*Down R.*)

Oh, I'm not afraid.

MOLLIE.
(*At C.*)

It might be the scarlet fever.

HENRIETTA.

I was vaccinated a month ago.

SKEET.

(*Behind desk.*)
Where?

(*The ladies all look at him in astonishment. He bends over ledger and works furiously.*)

HENRIETTA.

(*After a slight pause.*)
In the doctor's office in San Francisco.

MOLLIE.

It's the yellow fever.

AUNT J.

(*At L., who has been bending forward listening with increasing terror, throws up her arms.*)

Yaller fever. Good-night! (*Sinks in chair at L.*)

MOLLIE.

(*To HENRIETTA.*)

Now, really, I—

HENRIETTA.

Oh, don't try to think up any more excuses. I'm not going and there's an end of it. I think that man Stone stole my stock in the Furniture Company and I'm going to stay here until I can watch him.

MOLLIE.

Oh, well, if you feel that way—

HENRIETTA.

That's just the way I feel. I'll go upstairs and pack up, but I'll camp in here until I know what has become of my property. (*Crosses to R.*)

MOLLIE.

(*Following her.*)

But—

HENRIETTA.

If necessary I'll telegraph to my husband.

MOLLIE.

Which one of them?

HENRIETTA.

My last one, of course. Mr. Ryker is dead.

MOLLIE.

Ryker? Did you say Ryker?

HENRIETTA.

Yes. He was my first. Poor Jim. He went for a midnight swim on the shores of Waikiki and was drowned. He always *was* such an impetuous man. (*Exit at R.*)

MOLLIE.

No wonder Mr. Ryker won't come back until she leaves.

SKEET.

I don't get it at all. Why won't he?

MOLLIE.

Because she's his widow.

SKEET.

His widow? Why, he ain't dead.

MOLLIE.

She thinks he is and has married again. Oh, this is a pretty mix-up, isn't it? He won't come and she won't go and I'm at the end of my string.

AUNT J.

(*Very much frightened, comes to MOLLIE.*)

Miss Mollie, who is it dat's got de yaller fever and de smallpox and all dem ailments?

MOLLIE.

No one, Aunt Jubilee. That was just my imagination.

AUNT J.

Honest?

MOLLIE.

Of course.

AUNT J.

Miss Mollie, I likes you, and I likes de Rip Van Winkle Inn, but I jes' naturally got to protect my reputation. I'm a 'spectable member of de Afro-American Mefodis' Church, I is, an' I can't be stayin' yere in a place mixed up wiv burglums an' hants and yaller fever and smallpox, so's I's jes' naturally obliged to resign. It jes' plum scan'lous yere. Miss Mollie, scan'lous, perfec'ly scan'lous. (*Exits at R. muttering.*)

MOLLIE.

Worse and more of it. Now Jubilee is going to leave me. I don't know what to do.

SKEET.

Buck up, Mollie. You still got me.

MOLLIE.

Yes, but suppose—

Enter DIANA from R. hurriedly.

DIANA.

Mollie, uncle is here. I saw him from the window upstairs.

MOLLIE.

Uncle?

DIANA.

Yes. Senator M'Corkle. He's Elsie's father

You'd better go upstairs and warn her, for uncle looks excited and whenever he's excited something horrible always happens. (*Exits C. D.*)

Enter JIM from R. disguised as the old man. He crosses down to table L. C., takes a pack of cards from pocket and begins to play solitaire. SKEET comes down to him.

JIM.

(*Looks up at SKEET.*)

Fine mornin', ain't it?

SKEET.

Sure. I'm goin' down to the village. Want a ride?

JIM.

(*With his hand behind his ear.*)

Hey?

SKEET.

(*Loudly.*)

Want to take a ride? A ride!

JIM.

Inside? Inside what?

SKEET.

(*Yells.*)

I said did you want to take a ride?

JIM.

Nope. I gotta bad case of rheumatism, I have, and I cal'late I'll set 'round the house a spell today. It's kinder dampy outside. Wanter play keerds?

SKEET.

Naw, I ain't got time. (*Exit at L.*)

JIM.

I like a good game o' solitary myself, ef folks 'ud only quit pesterin' me.

Enter DIANA and SENATOR M'CORKLE from C. D.
SENATOR M'CORKLE.

Where is she? I want to see her at once. Diana, didn't you say she was here?

DIANA.

She's upstairs asleep. Now don't you worry, uncle. She's all right.

SENATOR.

And where is the man? (*Savagely.*) Just let me have a short talk with *him*. That's all. What's his name?

DIANA.

His name is Teddy Gilmore.

SENATOR.

Well, where is he? Where is he? I want to see him, d'y' hear? I want to see him.

DIANA.

He's not here.

SENATOR.

Not here? Has he run away and left her already?

MOLLIE.

(*Behind desk.*)

Oh, no. But I don't think you can see him just now. He's very busy.

SENATOR.

He won't be too busy to see me. Where is he, I say!

DIANA.

(*At window.*)

He's out on the tennis court, uncle. There he is. (*Points off stage.*)

SENATOR.

(*Looking out of window.*)

That fellow in white?

DIANA.

Yes.

SENATOR.

(Dubiously.)

H'm! He's bigger than I thought he was, but I want a few words with him. Just let me see him face to face, that's all. (*Exits C. D.*)

DIANA.

I'll go up and warn Elsie. Oh, what a terrible day. (*Exit at R.*)

MOLLIE.

Terrible? I'd call it worse than that. (*Comes down to Jim.*) I'm so nervous and excited that I don't know whether I'm standing on my head or my heels.

JIM.

(Looks up.)

Hey?

MOLLIE.

Oh, it's you, is it? You'd better go upstairs.

JIM.

Hey?

MOLLIE.

(Loudly.)

You'd better go upstairs. We've got to clean up in here. Clean up!

JIM.

Clean up? You think you kin clean me up playin' keerds? Come on and try it.

MOLLIE.

(Throws up her hands in despair.)

Oh, what's the use? (*Gets dinner bell from desk.*) Say, if you want anything just ring this bell.

JIM.

Hey?

MOLLIE.

(Screams.)

Bell, bell, bell!

JIM.

(*Shocked.*)

What kinder language is that from a nice young gal like you? Shame on you!

MOLLIE.

If you need anything ring this bell. (*Gives it to him.*)

JIM.

(*Puts it on table.*)

All right. I'd jest like to play a game of solitary if folks wouldn't keep pesterin' me. (*Plays cards.*)

MOLLIE.

(*Back of desk.*)

Ted, Ted! You can come up now.

TED ascends.

TED.

Where's my wife? MOLLIE.

I'll send her to you. The stockholders' meeting is to be at eleven o'clock. After that and the directors' meeting you'll be the president and can do as you please.

TED.

I don't know what you're talking about. I want my wife and I want to get back to Washington just as soon as possible.

MOLLIE.

We'll talk about that later.

TED.

Please go up and tell Elsie I'm here, or let me go up.

MOLLIE.

I'll send her down. (*Exits at R.*)

TED.

(*Comes down to JIM.*)

Say, you'd better go to your room.

JIM.

Hey?

TED.

Get out! My wife is coming. You'd better beat it. (*Loudly.*) Beat it!

JIM.

Eat what? I don't see nothin' to eat.

TED.

(*Takes his arm.*)

Come on upstairs. JIM.

Wanter have a game of keerds?

TED.

No!

JIM.

I heerd ye. All right. I'll keep on playin' solitare and I wish folks 'ud quit pesterin' me. (*Plays solitaire.*)

Enter ELSIE from L.

ELSIE.

Ted! (*Rushes to him.*)

TED.

Elsie! (*Embraces her.*)

ELSIE.

Where have you been?

TED.

In the basement. ELSIE.

Let us get our things and leave this horrid place at once.

TED.

In a minute. Say, you don't look well, darling.

ELSIE.

Well? I'm a nervous wreck. Ever since I drank those lemonades last night I've been feeling wobbly.

Oh, I wish we'd never come to this Inn. Diana telegraphed to papa and he's here now.

TED.

Here? Where?

ELSIE.

I don't know.

TED.

Get your hat and we'll leave at once. I don't want to meet papa just at present.

ELSIE.

(*Sobs on his shoulder.*)

Oh, Teddy, I'm so m-m-miserable.

TED.

(*Consoling her.*)

There, there, we'll go at once. Poor little girl.

Enter SENATOR from L.

SENATOR.

What's this? Elsie!

ELSIE.

(*At C.*)

It's papa.

SENATOR.

(*Thunders.*)

Who is that man? (ELSIE *embraces TED.*) Release my daughter!

ELSIE.

I don't want to be released. This is my husband.

SENATOR.

(*At L., astounded.*)

What!

ELSIE.

(*Faces him defiantly.*)

I said that this is my husband.

SENATOR.

How many husbands have you got? I just left your husband in there. (*Points to C. D.*)

ELSIE.

(*Bewildered.*)

Out there? (*Points to C. D.*)

SENATOR.

That's what I said, and he's been making love to half the women on the place. There's an old maid he's been engaged to for seven years. She's having hysterics out on the lawn.

ELSIE.

My husband? Engaged for seven years? To an old maid?

SENATOR.

That's probably why he brought you here.

ELSIE.

(*Turns to TED.*)

Oh, you brute.

SENATOR.

And now I find you in the embrace of this young scoundrel.

TED.

(*Comes between them, faces SENATOR.*)

Sir!

SENATOR.

Don't you try to bluff me. How dare you embrace another man's wife?

TED.

I—

ELSIE.

(*Pulling TED around to face her.*)

And how dare you be engaged to an old maid for s-s-seven years! Oh! This is too much.

SENATOR.

(*Pulls TED around to him.*)

How dare you speak in this manner to my daughter? Who in thunder are you?

TED.

(*With his face close to the SENATOR's.*)

She's my wife!

SENATOR.

She is not. Her husband is out there on the veranda.

TED.

It's a lie. I'm her husband. I'm the only husband she's got.

ELSIE.

The only one I ever had. (*Sobs.*) Now I wish I didn't have you. Engaged for seven years to an o-o-old maid, and you told me that I was your f-f-first and only l-l-love.

SENATOR.

He's out there. Come on and face him and if he don't thrash you, I will! (*Drags TED to L., ELSIE puts her arms around TED's waist and tries to drag him to R. TED pushes SENATOR against JIM's table. JIM for the first time looks up from his game; he is frightened and rings the bell violently. All talking at once saying anything appropriate. Note: These speeches must be written out and this scene rehearsed thoroughly.*)

JIM.

(*Yells.*)

Don't you hit me! (*Raises chair to protect himself.*)

Enter MAN from C. D. He comes down L.

ELSIE.

Father, take me away, take me away. He's in love

with another woman. (*Sobs on her father's shoulder as TED is raving down R.*)

SENATOR.

'There, there, go to your husband. (*Passes ELSIE to MAN.*)

MAN.

(*Tries to soothe her.*)

There, there! ELSIE.

(*Indignantly.*)

Let me alone. You're not my husband. I don't know you from Adam.

MAN.

You don't? Well, I'm dressed differently.

SENATOR.

Are you or are you not my son-in-law?

MAN.

There's been a mistake somewhere, Senator. There stands your son-in-law. (*Points to TED.*)

ELsie.

That's what I said all along.

SENATOR.

(*Goes to TED.*)

May I ask your name?

TED.

Certainly, papa. My name is Frederick Carpenter.

SENATOR.

Not the son of F. X. Carpenter of Washington?

TED.

Yes, sir. Do you know him?

SENATOR.

(*Shakes hands with TED.*)

Know him? I should say I do. I'd rather have you for a son-in-law than twenty men like Lord Vaughan.

ELSIE.

(Clinging to TED'S arm.)

And so would I.

JIM.

Now, ef the storm is over I'd be much obliged to you folks if you'd lemme finish my little game of solitary. (Plays solitaire.)

Enter MOLLIE and DIANA from R. and STONE from C. D.

ELSIE.

Teddy, I believe you've been more sinned against than sinning. I forgive you!

STONE.

(Comes down C.)

Teddy! Is that Teddy?

ELSIE.

That's what I call him.

MOLLIE.

(At L.)

Yes, that is the real Teddy. What have you got to say about it?

STONE.

(At C.)

I say it's a bunco game and you're all a bunch of swindlers. Your Ted evidently didn't arrive in time to sign the register and so you tried to pass off this man as a substitute. (Points to MAN, who is up L.)

MAN.

(Coming down to L. of STONE.)

Tried? I think she succeeded.

STONE.

But what good did it do? The lawyer has disappeared and you failed to sign his book last night.

MAN.

Oh, no, I didn't. I signed that all right.

STONE.

Impossible. How did you get the register?

MAN.

Mr. Ryker and I had a nice long chat last night in his room. I signed the book and am now ready after the meeting to take charge of my Furniture Company. If you don't believe it, ask my friend here. (Points to JIM.) JIM.

(*Looks up from game, his hand behind ear.*)

Hey?

(SENATOR, TED and ELSIE, up R., look on with much interest.) MAN.

(*Loudly, to JIM.*)

They want to know if I signed the register last night.

JIM.

(*Emphatically.*)

Yep. He signed the book all right. I know he did. 'Cause I seen him when he done it.

STONE.

(*Angrily crosses to JIM's table, leans over it.*)
And who in thunder are you?

JIM.

(*Looks up at him innocently.*)

Hey?

STONE.

(*Loudly.*)

I said what is your name?

JIM.

(*Rises, faces STONE.*)

My name (*changes to his natural voice*) is Jim Ryker. (Throws off wig.)

MOLLIE and STONE.

Mr. Ryker!

JIM.

Hey?

MOLLIE.

(Down L.)

But why (*pause*)—I thought you—(*pause*).
What did you dress up like that for?

JIM.

In order to be here on time to get Ted's signature
and yet not be recognized by my wife.

STONE.

Your wife?

JIM.

The lady from Honolulu. She's my widow.

MOLLIE.

She thinks you are drowned. She's married again.

JIM.

Yes, I know. I had an interesting little scene with
her upstairs. She thought I was a ghost.

MOLLIE.

But she's committed bigamy. She's got two hus-
bands.

JIM.

Oh, no. Nothing as bad as that. I got a divorce
several months ago.

MOLLIE.

Where is she now?

JIM.

On her way to the village.

MOLLIE.

After her stock in the Furniture Company.

JIM.

Oh, no. That was *my* stock. That's why I robbed
the safe.

MOLLIE AND OTHERS.

You? You robbed the safe.

JIM.

Sure. I was just recovering my own property.

STONE.

(At L. C., turns to MAN, who is now C.)

You say you signed the register last night?

MAN.

I did.

STONE.

Then you are a forger. You had no right to sign it at all. It should have been signed by Ted Gilmore.

JIM.

(At R. C.)

Hey?

STONE.

It should have been signed by the real Ted Gilmore.

JIM.

(At L. C.)

It was signed by Ted Gilmore. (Points to MAN.) He's the real Ted Gilmore!

STONE.

More trickery. (Points to TED.) There stands Ted Gilmore.

TED.

Oh, no. My name is Frederick Carpenter.

ELSIE.

And I just call him Ted for short.

JIM.

I've known Ted Gilmore for the past ten years and I'll take oath that that is the man. (Points to MAN.)

MOLLIE.

(*Down L.*)

I don't understand.

MAN.

(*At C.*)

It's the truth. I am the real Ted Gilmore.

MOLLIE.

You are? Then why did you—(*pauses*).

MAN.

Just a little romantic adventure. I accepted a job up here just to be near the old place and look over the ground. Yesterday I met a young lady who wanted to meet a hero, so I decided to give her a chance. That's all.

DIANA.

(*Down L. with MOLLIE.*)

Then you are not the hero of the tunnel! Another deception.

Enter SKEET from L.

SKEET.

(*In doorway at L.*)

Oh, yes he is. He's the man who pulled me out of the tunnel.

MOLLIE.

And he's the man who pulled me out of the hole.

JIM.

And he's the new president of the Furniture Company. (*To STONE.*) And that let's you out.

SKEET.

(*Goes to STONE.*)

Your room's taken by another party. So you're checked out. (*Hands him his hat.*) There's your hat, so what's your hurry? (*Escorts him to C. D.*)

Come around sometime next week and take a look at our Furniture Factory. (*Pushes him out C. D.*)
Good morning!

JIM.

I think I'll go and clean up. (*Crosses to R.*) I think every little detail has been attended to and things are straightened out at last. (*Exit R.*)

MAN.

(*Goes to DIANA.*)

Can you ever forgive me?

DIANA.

And you're not Elsie's husband?

MAN.

I'm not anybody's husband (*pauses, looks at her significantly*) yet.

DIANA.

Well, if my friends Mollie and Skeet can vouch for you, I think (*pauses*).

MAN.

Yes?

DIANA.

(*Runs up to C. D.*)

I'll meet you on the tennis court. (*Runs out C. D.*)

MAN.

(*Follows her gaily.*)

And I'll be right there. Believe me! (*Exit C. D.*)

TED.

I wonder if I can get anything to eat.

SENATOR.

There's a lunch all ready in the dining room. I ordered it for Elsie's other husband. Come on. (*Exits L.*)

TED.

Hungry, Elsie?

ELSIE.

Awfully. I haven't had anything to eat since I've been married. But I'm just as happy as I can be. (They go out at L.)

MOLLIE.

Well, it's all coming out right in spite of everything.

SKEET.

Sure it is. And there ain't another girl in the whole State of New York who could have put the thing through like you did. Say, Mollie—

MOLLIE.

Hum? (With closed lips.)

SKEET.

I dunno if I can say it er not. (Clears throat.) Ahem! My throat is so dry I can hardly whistle.

MOLLIE.

Don't whistle. Just say what you started out to say.

SKEET.

Do y' mean it? Say, Mollie, d' you think y' could learn to love me without straining yourself too much? (She starts to speak.) Wait a minute! Don't answer yet, I ain't strong enough to bear it. I never talked like this to a girl before. Mollie, I ain't got much salted away in the bank. Only three hundred, that's all. Do you think you could? You know what I mean?

MOLLIE.

Yes, Skeet, I know what you mean and I think I could.

SKEET.

Honest! (Starts to embrace her.)

Enter Miss L. from R.

MISS L.

Why, Mollie—Skeet, I'm astonished.

MOLLIE.

So am I. I never was so astonished in my life.

MISS L.

You should never kiss a young lady like that.
Kiss her hand.

SKEET.

Her hand? I jes' as soon kiss a punkin.

MISS L.

The idea!

MOLLIE.

Is it against the law?

MISS L.

No, I suppose not.

SKEET.

Then put your shawl over your eyes and what you
don't see won't hurt you.

MISS L.

The idea! (*Flounces out at R.*)

SKEET.

She meant that kissing is liable to carry germs.
Do you think you can catch things by kissing,
Mollie?

MOLLIE.

Maybe. I might have caught a millionaire.

SKEET.

What 'ud you say if I'd kiss your hand?

MOLLIE.

I don't know. (*Pauses.*) I think I'd tell you to be
more ambitious.

SKEET.

Mollie! (*Embraces her as curtain falls.*)

CURTAIN.

For the Love of Johnny

BY
HARRY HAMILTON

A PLAY, in 3 acts; 6 males, 3 females. Time, $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours. **Scenes:** 1 interior, 1 exterior. In his original manuscript the author called this play "a play of human hearts," and a page of description could not better explain its character.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

Ethel Banks.....	The Niece
Harriet Banks.....	The Aunt
Dorothy Banks.....	The Daughter
Dick Wayburn.....	The Coward
Jerrymeyer Banks.....	The Uncle
Phil Osborne.....	The Soldier
John Turkey-Legs.....	The Indian
Father Ryan.....	The Priest
Johnny Banks.....	The Nephew
Mr. Woods.....	The Stranger

Around an intensely dramatic situation, the author has woven a human throbbing story abounding in clean and clever comedy and genuine pathos. We do not love all the characters the way we do Ethel and Johnny but we are not indifferent to any for they are all intensely human. We follow the Cinderella-like form of Ethel through the play with tears and laughter; we fear Dick Wayburn; our hearts are won by the courage and unselfishness of Father Ryan; we grow fat laughing at Phil, the returned soldier; John Turkey-Legs inspires within us a wholesome respect for the native Red Man; Uncle Jerry wins our sympathy and forgiveness; we admire Dorothy, and we finally take back all we said about Aunt Harriet when in the last act she renounces the domestic trousers she has worn all through the play. No play since "The Parish Priest" or "The Rosary" has had a more appealing character of a priest than that of Father Ryan. A professional play, successful on the road, within the scope of talented amateur players. Stage directions and business unusually complete.

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When Smith Stepped Out

BY

HARRY OSBORNE

A COMEDY, in 3 acts; 4 males, 4 females. Time, about 2 hours. Scene: 1 interior throughout.

"Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith."

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

William Horace Smith.....	Uncle Bill
George Smith.....	His Nephew
Richard Keene.....	A Detective
Bob Stanley.....	A Wooer
Mrs. George Smith.....	Nellie
Muriel Armitage.....	Her Younger Sister
Miss Winslow	A Spinster
Hilda.....	The Maid at the Smith's

Did you ever stop to think how dangerous it is to carry a loaded revolver? Dear, old, absent-minded Uncle Bill Smith, from Australia on a visit, starts something difficult to finish when he steps out for his evening walk with a revolver in his pocket. He innocently robs a man of his watch, loses his hat, gives the detective a merry chase, almost sees the inside of a jail and just escapes the matrimonial clutches of a desperate spinster. He all but breaks up one peaceful home but starts another by getting a bashful lover to propose and in the end has everyone stepping about as lively as the kangaroo from his native Australia. It all happens quickly, laughingly, mysteriously and thrillingly. After two hours of fast fun the audience will discover that melancholy, indigestion and worries have all stepped out with the sick detective who left just as the curtain dropped. No star part, but strong characterization throughout, easily within the range of amateurs.

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CHICAGO

Assisted By Sadie

BY

WALTER BEN HARE

A COMEDY of mystery, in 4 acts; 6 males, 6 females.
Time, 2½ hours. Scenes: 2 easy interiors.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

Alonzo Dow	.....	The Mysterious Clubman
Cameron	.....	The Clever Detective
Bunch	.....	The Slangy Bellboy
Dr. Beedle	.....	The Old Professor
Colonel Jenniver	.....	The Puzzled Hotel Manager
Mr. Null	.....	The Young Millionaire
Sadie	.....	The Stenographer
Harriet	.....	The Society Girl
Señora Gonzales	.....	The Fascinator
Mrs. C. Christopher Carley	.....	The Peppery Dowager
Vicky	.....	The Debutante
Mrs. Quinn	.....	The Maid

This is a swiftly moving ingenious comedy of adventure, sparkling with humor and replete with mystery. Excitement, laughter and a mounting tensity of emotion are blended with the charm of a delightful style. A \$20,000 pearl necklace is stolen at a large seaside hotel. This is followed by other crimes until the detectives and incidentally the audience find themselves in a maze of intrigue and mystery from which they are not extricated until the final curtain and then only with the assistance of Sadie. Into the pervading comedy scenes are blended pathos, serious action and incident until the audience wonders what will happen next. The twelve characters are about equally balanced.

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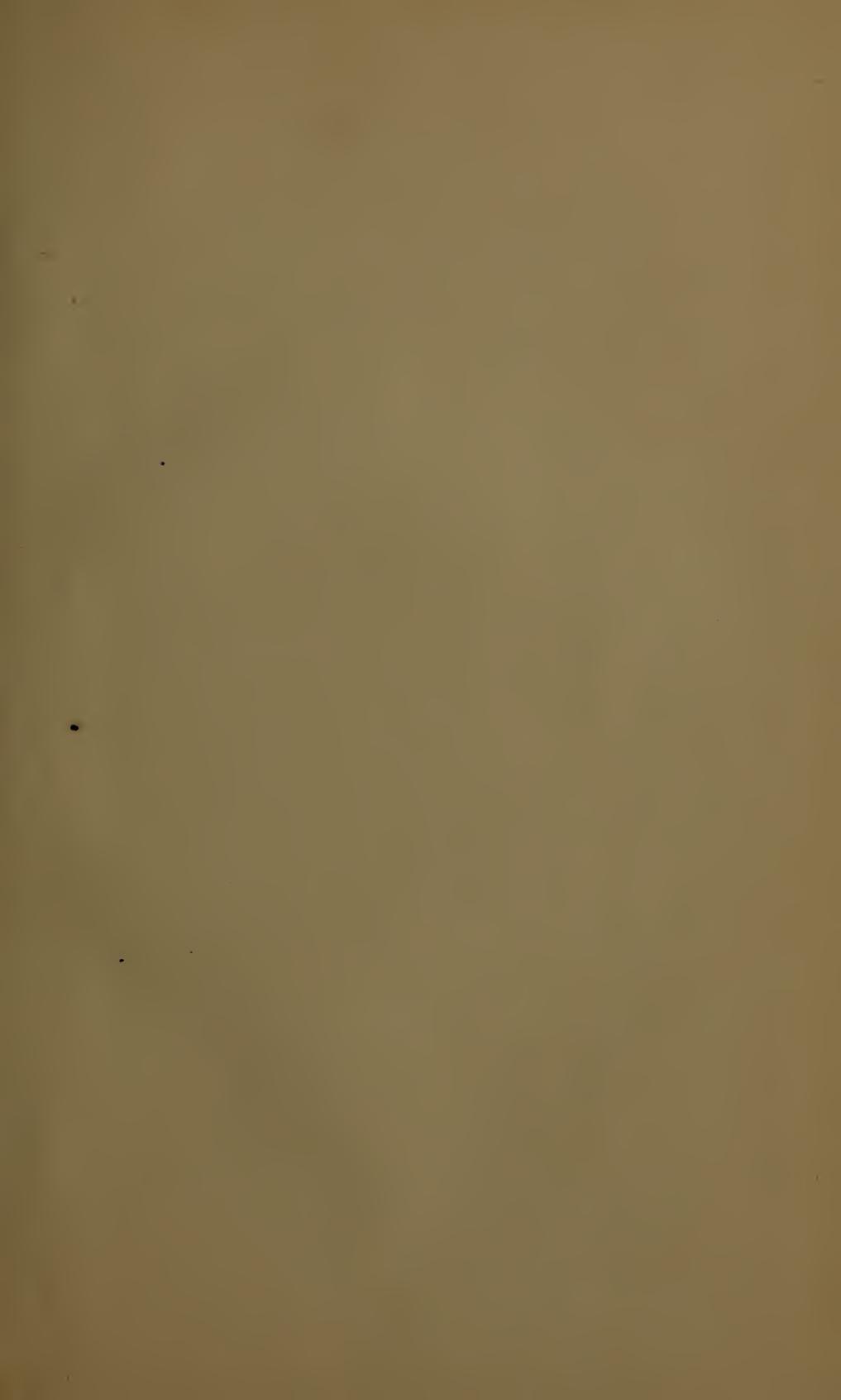
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